

72-77a - P.F.M.

Extra # 11

Petticoat Row

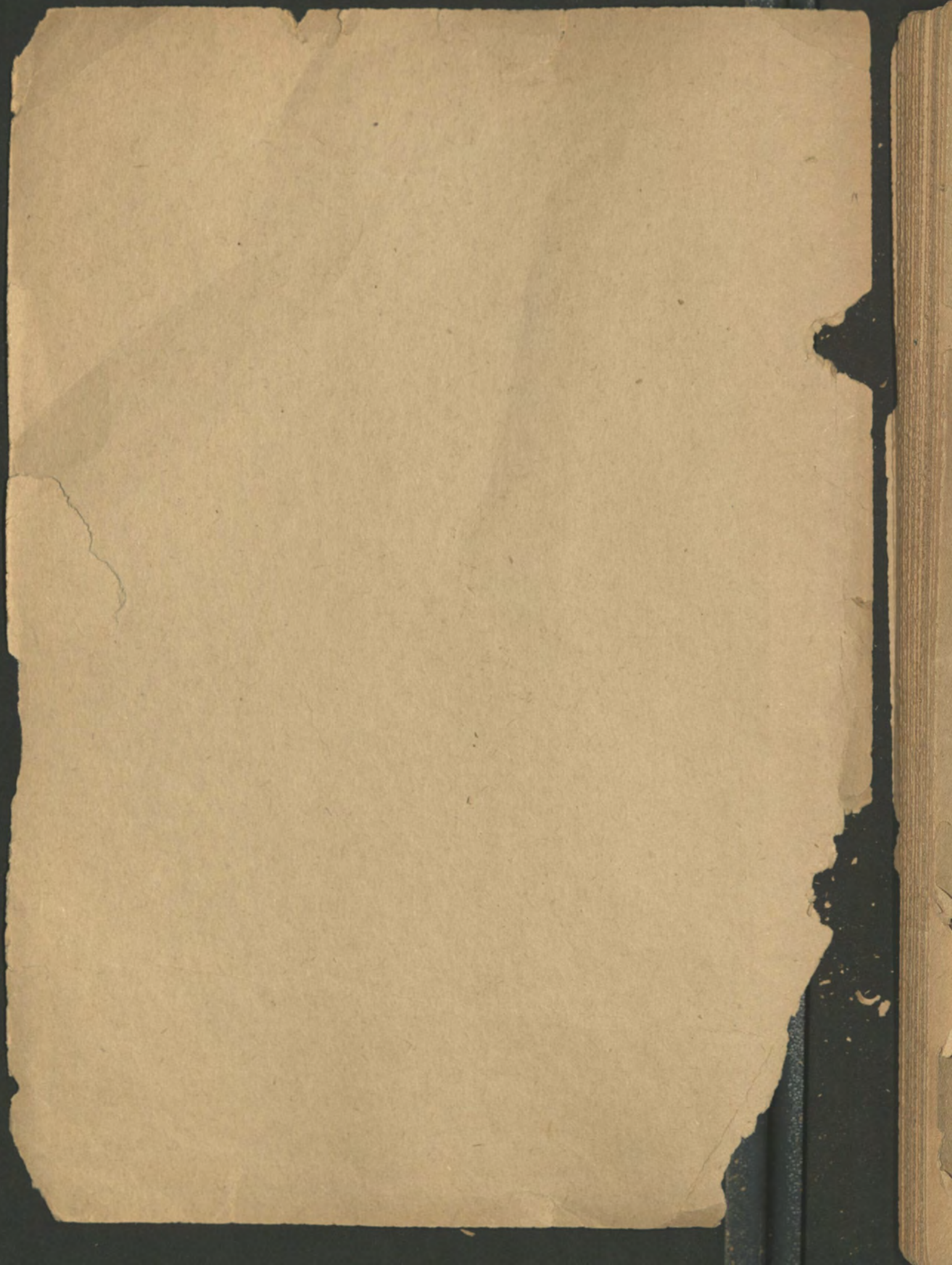
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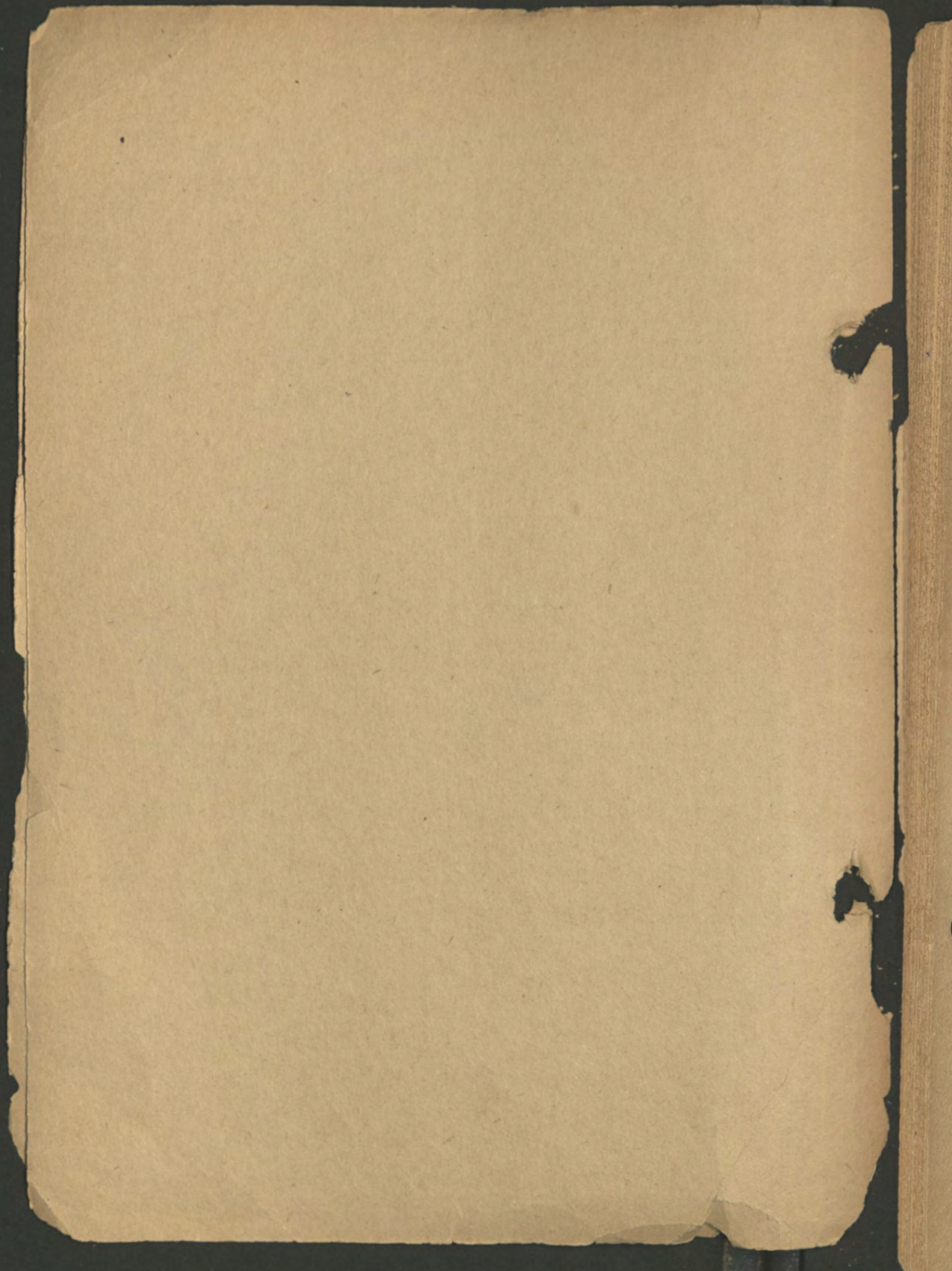
Row

Coll 57



Names

Adams Nancy  
Bond, Katherine  
Burgess, Mildred  
Cook, Jean  
x Coffin, Mrs. James  
Dell, Mrs. Burnham  
Folger, Mrs. George  
Gillis, ~~H~~ Adela'id  
McGrady, Mrs.  
Jaekle, Mrs. Matthew  
Kerr, Mrs. Peter  
Macy, Aletha  
Ramsdell, Ellen  
Ray, Gladys  
Ray, Mrs. Earl  
Sarg, Mary  
Stevens, Cora  
Stovell, Maud  
Sutherland, Mrs. Charles  
Sutton, Ruth  
Swain, Daisy  
Sylvia, Edith  
Walker, Mary



## Petticoat Row

Nancy Adams

Petticoat Row weaves this week the story of Mrs. Walton H. Adams, descendant of three generations of whalers, for 12 years the only woman member of the Nantucket Finance Committee, present vice-chairman of the Republican Town Committee and for nine years an active participant in the Civic League.

This friendly, community-minded person who before her marriage was Miss Nancy Grant, admits also to a working interest in oil-painting, a wide variety of books and genealogy.

In tracing her ancestry, she discovered that the first Grant, from the Highlands of Scotland, was wrecked in the early 19th century on a Nantucket Sandbar. Shaking the brine from his eyes and squeezing the salt water from his clothes, James Grant took a good look at the crescent-shaped Island. Apparently he liked what he saw for in 1808 he married Elizabeth Ellis, a direct descendant of Tristram Folger and settled here, thus establishing a line of Grants on the Island.

Virtually all trace of her great-grandfather Grant is lost, Mrs. Adams said, except for a family story still extant that an oil painting of the old gentleman stood for many years in the attic of his Orange Street home. The story goes that one of the younger generation of Grants would carry his bow and arrow up to the attic on stormy days, there to amuse himself by using the painting of the kilted gentleman as a target!

Mrs. Adams' grandfather, Charles Grant, son of James, married one Nancy J. Wyer of Nantucket. The 16-year-old bride promptly set out on a series of globe-girdling voyages with her seafaring husband, thus providing her children with foreign birthplaces.

Their first son, Charles William Grant, achieved the distinction of being the first white child born on Pitcairn Island in the Pacific. In commenting on this occurrence, Mrs. Adams recalled Peggy Christian, one of the descendants of The Bounty mutineers, who was affectionately called by her "Aunt Peggy," remained a family friend many years.

### Native of Samoa

Mrs. Adams' father, George A. Grant, was born in 1857, in the town of Apia, on the island of Upolu, one of the Samoan group in the South Pacific Ocean. The actual event took place in the home of the British Consul which at that time stood at the foot of the hill where Robert Louis Stevenson was to live out his last years.

George A. Grant's little sister, Eleanor Baker Grant, Mrs. Adams' aunt, greeted the world in New Zealand, that part of the region sometimes called "Down Under."

Foreign backgrounds such as these were not uncommon for the children of Nantucket whalers who traversed the oceans of the world in their quest for whale. Fathers and their accompanying spouses were out from their

home port as many as four and five years at a time and the roll of the deck beneath their running feet became familiar to quite a few children.

Mrs. Adams commented that the women who remained at home during the long, empty years, often had a harder life than those wives with courage to follow where the menfolk led.

If here grandfather Grant had taken his wife along on his voyages they might not have become strangers for he spent 56 years whaling. At 11 and a half, he signed as cabin boy and worked faithfully until at 30 he walked the decks of the "Walter Scott," his own master. In 1880, he retired to private life but not into inactivity. He served as custodian of the old mill for many years, interlarding his remarks on the history of the building with salty yarns of his whaling years. In 1904, he died at the age of 91.

With such a seafaring background, obviously there was only one calling for the sons of Mrs. Adams' grandfather—the sea. George A. Grant, far more at home on shipboard than on land, began as a young man to harvest a livelihood from the deep waters of foreign oceans.

Home from a voyage in 1885, he went with a friend to call on two young ladies of Fairhaven. One of them was a Madeline A. Briggs, lively and pretty and just

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16. Following in the footsteps of his father, young George Grant married Miss Briggs after a brief courtship but, unlike his elder, left his young wife at her parents' home and sailed away on a four-year trip to the Arctic Ocean. His first child, a daughter, Nancy, was born in Fairhaven August 26, 1887 while he was on the voyages. If Mrs. Adams feels any regret at her off-island birth she does not mention it, for her earliest memories are of Nantucket. Here parents removed to the Island in 1890 when Mr. Grant retired from active seafaring to live in her grandfather Grant's home on Orange Street.

Her sister, Madeline, now Mrs. Edward Norcross of Fairhaven, and her brother, Arthur B. Grant, who follows the sea as a fisherman, also of Fairhaven, were both Nantucket-born, however. For the next 19 years, their father served at Surfside with the Life Saving Station which has since been absorbed by the Coast Guard. The years between 1909 and 1942 when he died at 85 were devoted to carpentry, masonry and making sailors' hammocks—a skill he inherited from his father. In 1930 he became curator of the Whaling Museum at the instigation of the late William Macy, president of the Historical Association.

His knowledge and experience in whaling came in handy in arranging the historical relics of the Museum which have been seen by thousands of Summer visitors. To this day, the arrangement remains the same and the Museum stands as a memorial to the curator.

Mrs. Adams attended Nantucket public schools, including the High School, and has many fond recollections of those days and her teachers who included Miss Annie Ring, Miss Ella Cox and Miss Susan Barrett, now Mrs. Mayo of the Cape area and other teachers.

She was married April 19, 1911 to Walton H. Adams, retired former assistant postmaster of the Nantucket Post Office who missed only seven days in 43 years of postal service. Prior to her marriage, she clerked for a time in Louis Coffin's Dry Goods store, and in E. A. Lawrence, also a dry good shop which was then situated where Sheehan's is now.

#### Finance Committee Member

Mrs. Adams found her 12 years service as a member of the Finance Committee thoroughly enjoyable and educational despite the fact she was the only member of her sex on the board.

"I find men more mentally alert than many women," she declared, "and the discussions often led into interesting comments on subjects unrelated to the business of the evening."

The Finance Committee was the successor to a Committee of Ten which was originally appointed by the Board of Selectmen in 1915 to make recommendations on town finance. In 1925, it became the Finance Committee with the late Ernest R. Terry as its first secretary. He was succeeded by the late O. D. Ingall. Mrs. Adams became the third secretary of the group and as such recorded the minutes, wrote the annual reports and helped decide issues which came before the Committee.

The hope of the committee was to recommend sufficient funds for maintaining efficient community services, yet at the same time to keep taxes at a reasonable level, she said.

"Working on those problems of balancing one appropriation against another," she smiled, "was fascinating business. I enjoyed every minute of it."

Her interest in genealogy is not a new enthusiasm. She has always been absorbed in her own family history and in the general story of Nantucket families. During the 15 years she was curator of the Historical Association from 1926 to 1941, she has traced the origin of many Island families.

When ill health compelled her retirement from the curatorship, she turned to oil-painting as a diverting hobby. She is having a great real of fun with the new medium but she modestly admits that except for learning something of color-mixing and the application of color to canvas, she has a long way to go.

#### Active Organizations

Full of engaging, friendly enthusiasms for her work and her hobbies, Mrs. Adams would naturally be drawn into the activities of many organizations. For three years she was treasurer of St. Paul's Episcopal Church—a service which was terminated when she vacationed in the South during the Winter of 1946. She is a life member of the Nantucket Historical Association and a vice-president at the present time.

In addition, she is a trustee and corresponding secretary of the Nantucket Atheneum, a member and ex-regent of the Abiah Folger Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a charter member of the Order of the Eastern Star, a

member of the executive committee of the Public Health Association and for many years has been an active member of the Island Rebekah Lodge. She was recently made the president of the Nantucket branch of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

From her home on Fair Street, Mrs. Adams looks out on the world and finds it good. She is at the moment engaged in a further tracing of the Grants and their Scot background. It is her hope someday to write the old story for it contains all the elements of an exciting adventure tale. "There is still much work to be done in research before I can go on with the writing," she declared. "Someday I hope to find a lost logbook of my great-grand-father's. If I do, that will bring to light several missing links in material I already have."

# Petticoat Row

Katherine Bond

One of the versatile members of the Island's fairer sex is Mrs. Katherine Bond, an indefatigable community and church worker whose artistic talents as a singer and pianist have placed her high in popularity in Nantucket's entertainment field.

This young lady manages to find time to complement the role of her husband, the Rev. Claude Bond as minister of the First Congregational Church, by directing and appearing in musical entertainment while fulfill-

ing, simultaneously, her obligations as a homemaker and mother of two children.

Where the green, rolling Blue Ridge lays a finger across the Northern boundary of Georgia—where, in the Spring, peach orchards fling their softly-colored fragrance across the countryside—there Mrs. Bond was born.

Sitting in her attractive, informal living room of her home on West Chester Street, Mrs. Bond willingly admitted that she prefers the North despite her Southern childhood.

"After Mr. Bond and I left Sugar Hill, N. H.," she said, "we went to a church in Atlanta with the feeling we were returning 'home.' We stayed just 18 months, then came to Nantucket in 1938, realizing that, after all, the North was where we could really breathe. I love the cold snowy Winters."

There was a thread which bound Mrs. Bond to Nantucket long before 1938 but she did not discover it until recently when she visited her mother, Mrs. Jones Yow, in the South. While delving into records of the family tree, she learned one of her ancestors was a Nantucket Coffin. She ascertained that a branch of the family—the Graftons—had three sons who came to the American colonies in the latter part of the 17th century. One settled in Salem, Mass. The one who married the Nantucket Coffin is believed to have settled on the Island afterwards. The third, of whom Mrs. Bond is a descendant, went to Virginia.

## Spent Childhood In Georgia

Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jones Yow, Mrs. Bond and her two brothers, Jones and Lawson, divided their early years between Athens, Ga. where the parents lived, and two cotton plantations in the family—one at Toccoa, Ga. and the other at Beaufort, Ga.

Her singing talents were apparent at the early age of six when she entered a private school, Miss Lucy Cobb's, in Athens, Ga. There she began to take singing roles in operettas. Singing came as natural to the child as smelling flowers and watching birds in flight.

Then she began to study the piano and as she grew proficient at playing, she accompanied herself in the lyrical songs she sang with so much delight. Her schooling kept pace with her development in the musical field. She transferred from the Athens school to the Washington Seminary at Atlanta, commuting there daily from Beaufort where she lived. Four years later she went with her family to Miami, Fla. where she entered a private "open-air" school. This period of her education amuses her even now for, while she readily admits the merits of the school, there was "a little too much fresh air" for her.

Probably the school which changed the course of her life was a public one at Toccoa for it was there she met a classmate who was to become her husband, the Rev. Bond. Their friendship developed into a courtship after Mr. Bond heard her sing in the church choir one Sunday morning, and finally to marriage October 20, 1933 in the small Congregational Church in Magnolia on Boston's North Shore where he had a student parish.

During the intervening courtship years, Mrs. Bond continued her academic and musical education. She studied for four years at Harcum Preparatory School at Bryn Mawr, Pa. and then entered Smith College at Northampton. Meanwhile, she had intended to study music at Curtis Institute in Philadelphia but at the last minute, all auditions in the Fall of 1929, were cancelled by Joseph Hoffman, a noted pianist.

At Smith she began a serious study of music for the first time, majoring in piano and working directly under John Duke, now widely recognized for his song compositions. She became the soprano soloist with the Smith College Glee Club and won prominence as a concert pianist and, in her Senior year, became leader of the club as well as choral director. At graduation, she was awarded the Harriet Dey Barnum prize "for the most outstanding work in music."

March 19, 1948

### Takes Voice Lessons

While emphasizing the study of piano, she obtained voice lessons during the Summer of her second Smith year at the New York State Chautauqua School under Horatio Connel. In recent years she has studied voice with Fritz Lehmann who Summers on the Island.

At the advice of her parents who felt she was drained of her strength by college activities, she became a councillor at a girls' camp in the Catskill Mountains in New York state. Refreshed by the outdoor life, she felt ready to resume a heavy schedule of activities.

Meanwhile, just before their marriage Mr. Bond had enrolled in the Andover-Newton Theological School and through his own efforts had been given the student parish at the Magnolia Congregational Church. After the wedding, Mrs. Bond accompanied her husband to classes at Andover and listened to lectures although she was not a student at the school.

The Sugar Hill, N. H. parish was Mr. Bond's first after his graduation in 1936. Mrs. Bond referred to those twelve months at Sugar Hill as so happily spent that, for her, they became as close to "heaven on earth" as it was possible for a human to reach.

The combined role of a minister's wife, mother, pianist and singer have provided Mrs. Bond with a philosophy which seeks to promote human understanding and friendship among mem-

bers of of the community in which she lives.

Her philosophy might well be summed up in this one statement of hers: "It is the people in a church or a community who are important. Cooperation is what makes a family, a church, or community."

She quoted an old rhyme which she said would always be pertinent:

"The Baptists go by water,  
The Methodist by land;  
But if you want to get to  
heaven, little children,  
You've got to go hand-in-  
hand."

### Enthusiastic About Work

When Mrs. Bond and Mr. Bond and their two children, Richard and Stephen came to Nantucket in 1938 after the year in Sugar Hill and 18 months in Atlanta, the couple plunged into the ministry work with an enthusiasm which has never diminished.

From the first Mrs. Bond became a leader in church entertainment and played an active part in activities of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital Auxiliary which she headed as president in 1945.

She was also director of the church choir until 1943 when Mrs. Leroy True succeeded her. In 1940 Mrs. Bond directed a cast of Sunday school children in the production of Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel at Bennett Hall. Since then Mrs. Bond has directed the youngsters in an average of three cantatas yearly—two at the Easter season and one at Christmas.

In the Summer of 1946, she trained 42 men and women for choral work and they gave two splendid evening concerts at Bennett Hall. Last Summer a large crowd gave her a rousing reception for her voice selections at concerts held at the Kenneth Taylor Galleries and the First Congregational Church with Miss Marienka Michna, well-known concert pianist, as accompanist.

During the past Winter, Mrs. Bond was one of the eight who made up the popular Holly Carollers under the direction of Howard Barber and sang during the Christmas season at various gatherings. At the present time, she is busy training singers who will participate in a show featuring Jerome Kern's rollicking lyrics for the benefit of the Coffin School. Charles Stackpole, assisted by Albert Fee, is arranging choruses and solos from Rose Marie, Naughty Marietta and Show Boat.

In the course of her busy day, there is little time left for Mrs. Bond to indulge in hobbies. Church, family, concerts and the teaching of her piano keep her quite occupied. Yet the responsive spirit which is an integral part of her charm never seems to flag. Her smile and friendly greetings and an occasional, fleeting mischief in her eyes endears her to everyone. For that enlivening cooperative philosophy which seems to allay all distrust, Mrs. Bond belongs in Petticoat Row.

Mildred  
Burgess

## Petticoat Row

Former Teacher Finds Contentment In  
197-Year-Old Home, Garden Near Ocean

Through the square panes of a window above the desk in Miss Mildred G. Burgess' living room of her snug Siasconset home, the sea gleamed in the pale Spring sun.

Within the quiet room, Miss Burgess, realtor, manager of her own tearoom for 17 years in Norton and former Island teacher, rested comfortably in a deep chair. Her eyes roamed affectionately to the many family heirlooms, to water-colors painted by friends and to the white walls of her 197-year-old house, built by John Gardner, an early ancestor, in approximately 1751.

Essentially human, Miss Burgess enjoys her constantly changing contacts with those who come to her in a business way. She characterizes her small living-room as "Grand Central Station" for, during the season, so many come to her for advice, practical help and a friendly chat—a condition concomitant with the real estate business.

She is a blend of two points of view—the off-Island which she has learned to understand and the Island which was her first home. This trait of seeing two ways at once has often caused an impish glee to rise within her if she is faced by the self-conscious, over-dressed dignity of a Summer vacationist, as happened one day some time ago.

Clad in scarlet slacks, Miss Burgess was on her hands and knees loosening soil around the plants in her terrace garden when a long shadow fell across her. Looking up she found a willowy, older woman, decked with floating fripperies and tinkling bracelets, in the garden. After a few minutes of introductory conversation, the woman inquired graciously if this was Miss Burgess' home. Then, not waiting for an answer, asked if she had ever been off-Island.

### A Dry Humorist

Miss Burgess, unable to resist the patronage of the stranger, answered, with tongue in cheek, "No, this is my home. I have never been away. All I need is right here . . . my house, my friends, the sea, music, books and magazines. Why

should I want to leave?" And she dropped back to her gardening, politely indicating the end of the conversation.

A few minutes later, the stranger returned and still gracious, made a classic comment which delights Miss Burgess even yet, "My dear, I want you to know how happy you have made me. I am now able to return to 'America' as you villagers so amusingly call the mainland and tell my friends that I have met a *real* native. I am so grateful." And she vanished forever from Miss Burgess' view.

Not all the wanderers through the home and garden of Miss Burgess are of that caliber, however. Many who buy her houses regard her with respect for in leading up to a sale, she will carefully point out the weaknesses of the property as well as its good points. This frankness has given her a reputation for fair dealing which resulted one day in the flattering remark, "You stand four square and sold on whatever you do."

In speaking of her years of managing a tearoom in the town of Norton, where Wheaton College and House-in-the-Pines, a junior college, are situated, said that during those 17 years she learned a great deal about young people. They thronged her popular eating-place, filling it with chatter and comment of their own problems and others. A thoughtful consideration of all she heard and saw gave her a firm basis for approaching the teen-age young.

She nodded to a photograph standing on an old drop-leaf, maple table. "That's my niece. She's a lovely girl but dreadfully muddled. If I have to straighten her out, as happens frequently, I give her the facts of her problem directly. Perhaps she doesn't always like it but she comes to me the next time she is tangled in the pains of growing-up."

While still running the Norton tearoom, Miss Burgess managed the Reuben Joy Homestead on Nantucket, across the street from where her birthplace stood, for several Summers.

Of a long line of Nantucket Quakers, for her great grandparents were Mark and Nancy Folger, the feeling for family and her native town is strong in her. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Burgess returned to the Island after their daughter and two sons, Harrison Gardner and Guy Burgess, had completed their grammar and high school education in Springfield, Mass.

### Taught School Here

It was natural for their daughter to enter the Nantucket schools as a teacher. For four years she taught first and second grade in the old South School on Orange street.

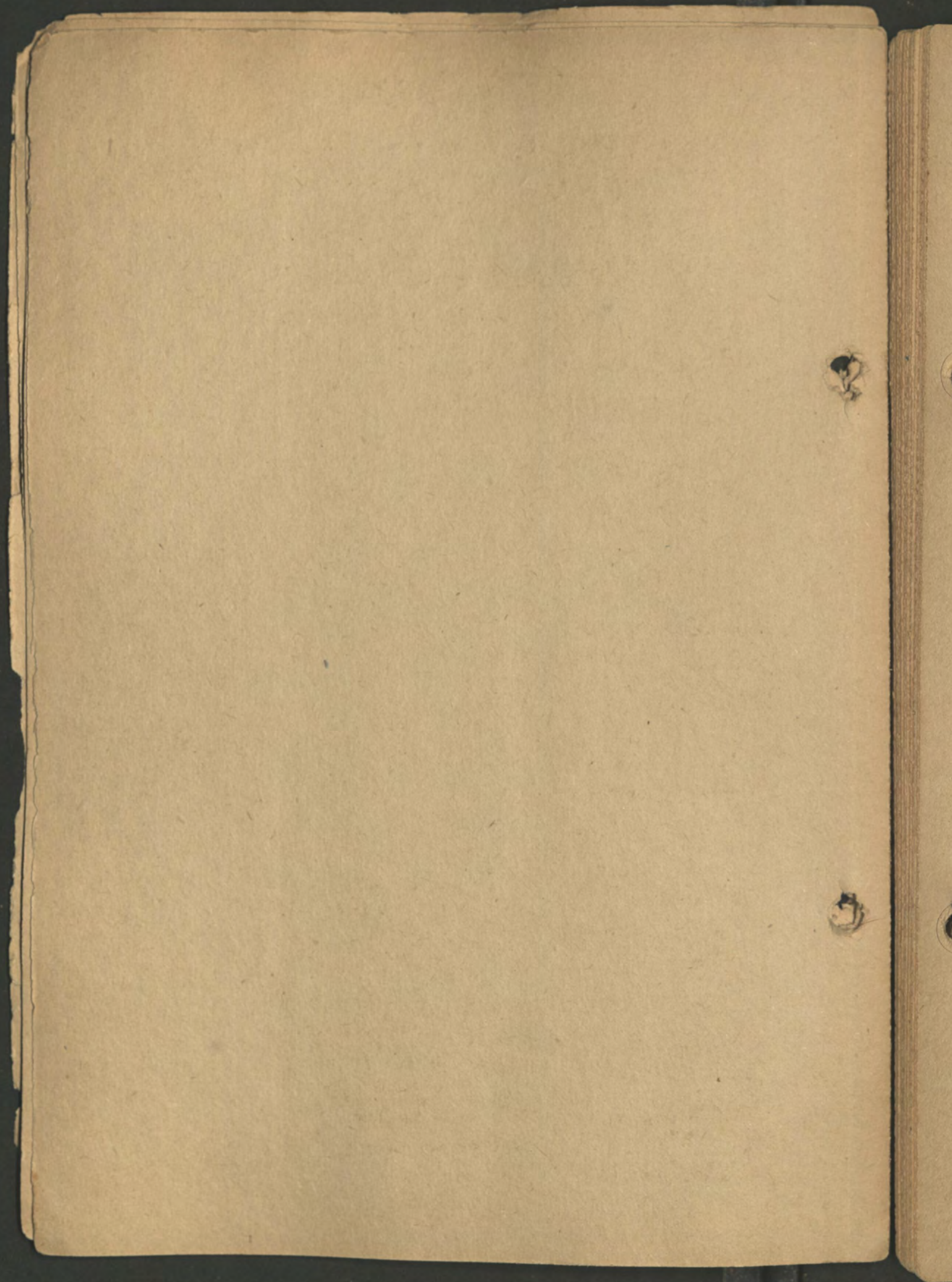
After the death of Mrs. Burgess in 1936, Mr. Burgess became superintendent of the Siasconset water works and father and daughter moved to Siasconset to live. A year later she wound up her business in Norton in order to clear the decks for the new venture in village real estate.

Miss Burgess when not poring over the typewriter answering the letters of her clientele, fills her days with several enthusiasms. Once, years ago, when the Nantucket Yacht Club was the old Athletic Club, she thoroughly enjoyed amateur theatricals, a feature of the club at that time. She delighted in comedy parts which gave her lively sense of humor full play.

Now, she is content with the many books and current magazines which fill her house. Often in the evening with the moonlight soft on the restless sea, the five rooms of the old house echo with the classical compositions of Beethoven, Brahms and other of the masters. Listening to the rich flow of music, fingers busy with her knitting, she knows a fine satisfaction with the simplicities of her way of living.

Miss Burgess adds a further revealing comment which is an index to her invigorating personality when she says, "If I need an answer to a disturbing problem, music and the sea beyond my garden and the beach refresh me enough so that I am enabled to find it. They have never failed me and I am sure they never will."

April 9, 1948



Jean Cook

## Petticoat Row

Back in the early Thirties, a well-brought up young Bostonian ran away from school as often as she could escape. She ran straight to the East Boston air-port, there to watch pilots and planes, to ask questions of those who would answer them.

This persisting passion for planes, unsanctioned by parental and school authorities, eventually led Mrs. Jean Adams Cook, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop C. Adams of Jamaica Plain, after years of hard work in aviation to the managership of Nantucket Memorial Airport — and thus straight through the gates of Petticoat Row.

As a schoolgirl, at Brimmer School in Boston, at Westover Academy in Middlebury, Conn., Mrs. Cook looks back to remember no earlier enthusiasm for planes than during the ten-age years when she was attending the Winsor School for Girls. She never kept a paper fleet of planes as Velvet kept a stable of paper horses in "National Velvet." She never bothered to study makes and types of planes as a youngster — until suddenly about 1933, she sensed an urgency to visit the East Boston Airport.

Companioned by a friend and scholmate, Anne Mumford, she spent countless afternoons hoping for a chance to ride the airways, although the idea scared her a little. That opportunity came in 1934. A pilot suggested she take a short flight with him over Boston and Dover. After a little persuasion she stepped into the plane and allowed herself to

be strapped to the seat. Joy and fear raced through her as the pilot took off and gained altitude. The first few minutes were thrilling to the young girl but when the pilot chose a sudden change in pace and began to stunt over the city of Dover, her heart almost bounced right over the edge of the plane. With masterful skills and fearlessness, he continued whirling lower and lower, banking, looping and standing on his nose, until it seemed to Mrs. Cook that roofs and chimneys would be ripped from the housetops.

Backo at the airport and safely on the ground, she swore openly she would never step foot in another plane — and for quite a period of time that fright, from the ill-advised stunting of the pilot, remained with her. Yet, her ambition to work with planes, to somehow find her place among the winged creatures, fearful as they were, steadily mounted.

### Flef With Mrs. Love

Her second ride which she finally forced herself to take was with Nancy Harkness, now Mrs. Robert Love of Wilmington, Del., who at that time was a licensed pilot, demonstrating private planes for flying time. That flight was smooth and easy and relit her desire to learn to handle a plane herself. While still at Winsor School, she saved her money carefully and eventually was able to take flying lessons. At the time, instruction came high—\$20 an hour. After three hours in the air, she was allowed to solo, proudly handling the plane with considerable skill.

Her family, however, continued to argue chiefly by suggestion, that flying was not suitable for a girl. Being a reasonable young person, Mrs. Cook attended Vesper George Arts School in Boston, then agreed to spend the winter in California in order to take a four-months journalism course at the University of California in Berkeley. Except for her flying lessons, this practical training in writing, which has always interested her, was "the best thing I ever did." "I got more out of it" than any other course, Mrs. Cook said. "And any writing I have done since then developed from that course."

She returned to Boston, however, in 1936, still determined to fly and to earn her living working in the aviation field. Her family finally capitulated to their daughter's ambition with the stipulation that she must first study in a good aviation school. "If you are going to fly," Mr. Adams said, "Then you must fly right."

So she entered the Inter-City Airlines School at East Boston, the first approved ground school for private licenses. Theory and practical instruction were given in regular morning classes while in the afternoon the students applied and practiced book work in the air with small planes. Most of those who attended the school were men although Mrs. Cook persuaded a friend, Miss Mary Kimball of Lexington, to take the course with her.

Many of the students of that first class are still making names for themselves in aviation. Harris Fahnstock who specialized in radio research, stressing its connection with flying, is now at Massachusetts Institute of Technology handling radio research problems. Captain Charles Rol-

lins, a pilot with Northeast Airlines, comes to the Island regularly with the DC3 and was the one who brought the large DC4 into Nantucket earlier this year, making approximately 15 successful landings.

After a Summer abroad where she piloted planes over England and Germany on a cross-continent air tour, Mrs. Cook, still determined on her career, decided that a business course at Bryant & Stratton would further her plans.

### Studied Photography

Completing this, she settled in to work for Inter City Airlines, demonstrating private planes, handling publicity, making aerial surveys and maps of estates, hospitals and other large property holdings. While in Europe, Mrs. Cook had become interested in photography and had brought back with her a Zeiss Contax Camera, suitable for taking aerial pictures. All of her photographic work at that time was done in connection with Hartley and Arnold of Boston.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Cook, whose family frequently visited on Nantucket, flew to the Island Summers. One of her first trips she remembers with a particular gratitude for the friendliness with which she was greeted at the airport. Piloted by John Shobe she flew down with Miss Mary Bird whose family, the Paul Birds from Chicago, were summering at Wauwinet. They landed about 9 in the morning and were surprised to see Mrs. Gertrude Raub, mother of the late David Raub, approaching them across the grassy field, holding a covered dish in her hands. After the first greetings, Mrs. Raub uncovered a bowl of fresh strawberries with the dew still upon them.

That initial gesture of hospitality made a lasting impression on Mrs. Cook who, even today, thinks that friendliness and hospitality should be the trademark of the Island's airport. "Even with frequent commercial planes and faster private planes of the present time," Mrs. Cook stressed "I try never to forget to keep our airport a humanly warm organization. First impressions of that kind are important to the stranger to the Island, especially when he arrives by air. A friendly word and a quiet greeting will do more for pleasant air relationship than almost any other single thing."

From that time, Mrs. Cook decided willy-nilly that Nantucket was where she wanted to live and to work. Her first real chance to be of service to the Island was in 1936 when the harbor froze the latter part of January. She was one of several pilots to ferry mail, newspapers, provisions and passengers during the "freeze-up."

March 12, 1948

A year or so later, in July, she again played a pilot's part in taking passengers, marooned on the Island by a ten-day ship strike, to the mainland as well as

bringing in provisions, mail, milk and other necessities. She recalls with considerable amusement the scramble of vacationists to leave and the lines of demanding people which stretched out beyond the barriers at the airport.

Still associated, during these two years, with Inter City Airlines in Boston, she developed writing contacts with aviation magazines and two newspapers. A column appeared in the now defunct Boston Transcript and another, a few years later, in the St. Petersburg Times, a Florida paper. A third column became a regular feature in the Yankee Pilot Magazine now published by the Milton Press in Cambridge. Yankee Pilot sent her to Florida for the open air races for women in which contest Mrs. Cook placed fourth. A few months later the same magazine sent her to Cleveland for similar races.

#### Worked For Eastman

She had also become one of an advisory board for Eastman Kodak to which she sent in research reports on aerial photography. But by the end of 1938 she had begun to work with David Raub, one of the first promoters of an airfield at Nantucket. She had rented a small summer cottage on South Beach where she stayed summers while piloting private planes at the germinating airport and taking a turn at whatever job presented itself.

Among those flying from the Island's "daisy field" airport were Leo Killen, now Army Air Force Officer, Alexander Craig, Miss Edith Jenney who now works with Dr. Eliot Joslin of Boston; Richard Marshall of the Cobbles, presently occupied at the Hartford Times, Levi Coffih, manager of a ranch in California; Thomas Williams, David Gray, son of the late David Gray of Sconset; Wesley Trimpi, a Summer resident; Charles Root of Sconset, Thomas Gibson, Clyde Cartwright, Clifford and William Allen and Parker Gray who in those days owned the Mayflower Airlines.

It surprised Mrs. Cook that even then there were so many interested people in passenger flying from and to the Island. Among those she carried as passengers were Gracie Field, Eddie Cantor; Victor Emmanuel, president of Consolidated aircraft and a summer resident in Siasconset; and Morris Ernst who was the airport's number one commuter.

However, it seemed important to work for the Nantucket airport in Boston, so in the Fall of 1939, Mrs. Cook returned to the mainland to carry out a certain amount of ground and paper work which was necessary for the development of the new project. While there, she wrote in collaboration with Margaret Kimball a book, "Heroines of the Sky," published in 1941 by Doubleday and Company and a selection of the Junior Literary Guild. The foreword was written by Jeanette Eaton, well-known writer of tee-age biographies and historical novels.

After her marriage in 1941 to Rodney English Cook who, previous to Pearl Harbor, surveyed the land for the projected Nantucket Airport and eventually was in charge of its construction, she and her husband bought of Eliot Whelden and remodelled a boathouse on the South Shore and there they have made their home ever since.

Manager of the Airport since 1941, Mrs. Cook has done an outstanding piece of work amalgamating diverse elements which might have impaired the smooth working of the organization. Building cooperatively with the Nantucket Airport Commission headed by Chairman George Lake, they have together ironed out financial and executive problems for the betterment of both town and airport.

#### Airport Hopes Cited

In considering the future, Mrs. Cook admits to several practical hopes such as a central administration of Island architecture and additional landing lights. She feels definitely that the new Inter-Airways Communication Station now being built at the airport will open Nantucket to unlimited trans-ocean flying possibilities. She also gives credit to the Weather Bureau, now located next to her quonset hut office, for advancing and sustaining the position the Airport holds with other fields of a similar size.

Her greatest hope, however, is a reiterated statement that Nantucket's airport may always stand not only for safety and efficiency but for the kind of hospitality not often found in most commercial fields. "Alighting on a field where the personnel have a pleasant word for the passenger, where a homely feeling of pleasure in greeting the stranger is evident, will do more for us than any other one factor," she said. "I should like to be that way always."

Mrs. Cook is a past president of the 99 Club, originally founded by Amelia Earhart in 1928 for international licensed women pilots. She is, of course, an active member of the Nantucket Flying Club, a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, and a charter member of the National Aeronautics Association. She is also a member of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, the World Institute for Biography and the Eastman Kodak advisory panel.

Of her four hobbies, art, photography, writing and flying, the later of course will always be Mrs. Cook's life-work. Yet, she continues to find occasional time

## Petticoat Row

Petticoat Row travels through the pines to Siasconset this week to lift the knocker on the Homestead's friendly door, the home of Mrs. James P. Coffin.

Hospitable stewardess of the rock-heated sand-pits, Mrs. Coffin has provided clam bakes in one Summer season for as many as 1,050 persons. Married to the late Mr. Coffin in December, 1939, at the home of the Ernest Coffins on New street, she laughed when she recalled her first busy season as dispenser of steamed food and iced watermelon "I had never done it before," she said, "I had to learn from the ground up. At the end of that season, believe me, I was an expert."

And this is the way to prepare a Coffin bake! Preheat in the pit a large stone for a full hour. Line the pit with rock seaweed. Wrap hot dogs, sausages and clams in separate cheesecloth sacks. Pack them around the hot rock and seaweed; lay on top live lobsters, white and sweet potatoes and husked sweet corn. This step, Mrs. Coffin emphasized, requires speed and skill. Cover the whole with tarpaulin, then with sand and steam for one hour.

When the plates of hot food are passed accompanied by small blue agate coffee pots of melted butter, and topped later with iced watermelon, coffee, crackers and cheese; when the delectable food is just a memory, the name of Coffin will be engraved forever on your mind, her guests testify.

### Busy Person

Not considering such jovial clambakes sufficient for one pair of hands, Mrs. Coffin, once in the same season, assisted in the care of four cows, two horses and 150 chickens, a large vegetable garden; peddled fresh milk, eggs and

(Continued on Page 2)

Ms. A. 9. 2. 1948

## Petticoat Row

### Mrs. Burnham N. Dell Leads Busy Life Between Community Activity And Home

One hundred thirteen years ago Reuben Bunker built a large

house with gracious lines on the height, now known as Academy Hill, which overlooks Nantucket rooftops and green waving trees. Today, that house still reflects serene and gracious living under the hospitable and friendly care of Mrs. Burnham N. Dell. The Dells bought the house 30 odd years ago, and settled down to permanent living in it two years ago.

Mrs. Dell, always actively interested in Island affairs, worked tirelessly for local civilian defense during 1944 and 1945. She and her daughter, Mrs. F. A. Macomber of Rochester, N. Y., and Mrs. Macomber's infant daughter returned to the house on the hill after both husbands were sent overseas for active war duty. During the months of separation and anxiety, two things kept Mrs. Dell above the surface of her worry—the laughing gaiety of the baby and her own loyal efforts for civilian defense.

Many and many a night when townsmen were delegated to watch in one of the observation towers located on the Island and was unable to appear, Mrs. Dell would trudge out and take over. Not a single plane travelling over Nantucket was missed by her vigilance and care. The training she received in plane spotting at the Civilian Defense School became the foundation for instructing many Nantucketers.

With the close of hostilities and the return of Mr. Dell and Mr. Macomber, Island living returned more nearly to normal. But Mrs. Dell's energy and belief in the finer aspects of Island life has never flagged. Today she is a trustee of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, an enthusiastic committee member of the newly organized Women's Society of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and a member of the Board of Directors of the Nantucket Boy's Club, founded in 1945 by Miss Louise Brooks.

As one of the Hospital trustees her duties are strictly of an executive nature although she serves on the House Committee which provides additional com-

forts for the nurses. Recently a plan had been suggested which should help to keep the nurses happier, Mrs. Dell said. During the Winter months tickets, bought and not used for local entertainments, would be turned over to the Hospital for the use of those nurses free of evening duty. In developing the idea, Mrs. Dell said that the nurses, tied to patients and hospital duties, sometimes failed to have any outside fun after working hours.

"Often," she continued, "they do not even hear about town entertainments. And if they do, they can't always afford to buy tickets themselves. If townspeople find they cannot use their tickets, we suggest they turn them over to the hospital which will pass them on to the nurses."

#### Interested In Church Group

Because the Women's Society of St. Paul's Church, under the leadership of Mrs. O. D. Westcott, plans on community pion-

neering, Mrs. Dell is particularly interested in its program. A branch of the main organization in Boston, the Society has already held several meetings, at one of which James Reid Parker, author, read some of his short stories. However, the group is not primarily social.

Mrs. Dell spoke with enthusiasm of the society's committee for medical and psychiatric care to which cases may be brought. Mrs. Dell is a member of this committee of which Mrs. George Jones is the chairman.

Mrs. Dell, with others, is working on a second project in which the Women's Society pioneers into the school field. Realizing that material on school scholarships is not available through any Island source, she and a committee are gathering a file on scholarships for girls and boys of all ages. "Right now on Nantucket that kind of scholarship material cannot be found," Mrs. Dell said, "yet once a file is made I am sure many young people who would like to go on with their education will find it invaluable. Of course, we will keep it up-to-date by checking it against yearly changes in the school field."

May 21, 1948

Her third great community interest, the Nantucket Boy's Club, comes from a natural concern for boys who have little supervised activity. The club was first promoted by Miss Brooks, who was forced to retire from active participation because of illness, and has been ably directed by Gilbert Wyer. Mrs. Dell and the other members of the Board of Directors are laying plans for a considerably expanded program for the Summer season, culminating in a fund drive the latter part of August.

"Miss Brooks who has given so much time, thought and financial help," Mrs. Dell said, "continues to work with us as the sole honorary member of the Board. It is unfortunate she is unable to carry out her former responsibilities. The present Board, however, will reflect her qualities which have already benefited so many Nantucket boys."

#### **Devote Time To Home**

Aside from this full community and church life, Mrs. Dell finds time never hangs heavily on her hands. Newly come to the business of unassisted house-keeping, she devotes a great share of time to the care of her home. Her greatest delight at the moment is her recently renovated kitchen, plans for which were designed and drawn by her elder daughter's husband, F. A. Macomber.

The problem was to convert an immense, old-fashioned kitchen into an attractive, efficient work-room without turning it into a laboratory. This was accomplished by a half partition, dividing the big room into units of working with the less frequently used equipment at a distance, the most frequently called for attractively arranged in one group. Now, Mrs. Dell, who lines her pans with aluminum paper to save pan washing and utilizes many other short-cuts, finds herself unwearied after the preparation of three meals.

Unaccustomed to cooking, Mrs. Dell smiles when asked how she enjoys it. "The first two essentials I have discovered are these. The meals must be interesting and attractive. Baking, except for cookies, I do very little of. We have lots of casserole dishes which I can make ready the day before or in the morning. Right now I am experimenting a good deal with dishes flavored with herbs."

#### **Travelled Extensively**

Mrs. Dell, the daughter of the late Wilson S. Bissell of Buffalo, law partner of Grover Cleveland and postmaster general during Mr. Cleveland's second administration, attended Miss Chapin's School in New York. Her studies were frequently interrupted, however, by prolonged trips to the

continent where for varying periods she would be placed in schools there. The lack of steadiness in her formal education, according to Mrs. Dell, resulted in what she called "practically no real education at all."

Her marriage to Mr. Dell in 1916 has been an exceptionally companionable and happy one. In spite of service in two world wars, periods of separation and anxiety for Mrs. Dell, they settled down to raise their two young daughters in Princeton, N. J. where Mr. Dell was teaching at the University.

The elder, a graduate of Vassar, is now Mrs. F. A. Macomber and the mother of two fine children. The younger girl married the brother of her sister's husband, Edward R. Macomber, and has a young son. Mrs. E. R. Macomber studied sculpturing for four years under George Demetrius in Boston.

In 1940, the architect brother in the Macomber duo designed and planned the small white house which stands on the corner of Academy Hill Lane where it curves up to the vestry door of the North Congregational Church. Here the daughters with their families may come to be with their parents, yet settle happily into their own life, too.

#### **Has Beautiful Garden**

The smooth green lawn and terrace, the dancing lines of gay flowers and clumps of vividness in fence corners join the big and little houses in a pattern of color. Gardens are an absorbing interest of both Mr. and Mrs. Dell. The terrace was built by Mr. Dell who until he tried it never realized work of that kind provided so much personal satisfaction.

Even Nantucket children wandering in and out of the vestry of the North Congregational Church, on their way to Brownies and to Sunday school, have observed with pleasure the mutual interest the Dells take in their garden.

A New York friend with whom Mrs. Dell lunched recently stimulated an unexpected response when she said over coffee, "And now you are going back to that far-away place, Nantucket. Why do you bury yourself there?"

Mrs. Dell's response was sincere and immediate. "We are not buried in Nantucket. We love Nantucket. There isn't a place I know of any where else where the people are finer or more kind-hearted. It is the unexpectedness of the small happenings

and the friendliness behind them that makes the Island a truly good place to live."

Mrs. Dell meant just that, too. She takes great pride in her Nantucket friendships, her work in the community and the days so full of unexpected, contented activity that, as she said, "I drop to sleep at night often tired but always happy."

## PETTICOAT ROW

### 54 - Acre Farm Keeps

#### Mrs. George Folger Busy

Where the road curves towards Polpis and the harbor traces a blue ribbon around the white cliffs of Pocomo Head, "Canopache," meaning "Place of Peace," comfortable farm-house of Dr. and Mrs. George Folger, stands between Fulling Creek and a sloping valley of young pines.

Mrs. Folger, for 26 years the busy wife of a busy doctor, admits willingly that her two great enthusiasms are her son Charles Wesley, six and a half, and the development of the farm which she purchased in 1938 from Walter Burgess. The 64 acres which comprise the property had been in the Burgess family for several generations but the present farm house is believed to be the second to stand on the hill.

Currently Mrs. Folger is busy with several farm projects. Along the edge of Fulling Creek, she cultivates carefully a 300-foot patch of water cress which finds a ready market in local stores. On a rambling, exploratory trip of her acres, one day, some time ago, she discovered an initial patch of the tasty green stuff and developed an immediate urge to double it. Cultivation of cress, Mrs. Folger says, is mainly a matter of keeping the beds free of grass so that fresh spring water may reach the roots at all times.

Mrs. Folger does not personally tend to the quarter acre vegetable and truck garden which spreads a precise pattern of healthy young plants at the back of the farm-house. Serafin, for the last several years an understanding worker at "Canopache", is entirely responsible for the vegetable garden and flowers—although plans, of course, Mrs. Folger discusses with him. She says, "Serafin has a green thumb. The plants seem to break the earth just for the opportunity to watch him at work." A small greenhouse standing in a row of single buildings is also part of Serafin's job, Mrs. Folger says.

#### Likes Animals, Too

It is her belief, a true farm is not just vegetables and flowers, much as she enjoys them both. Animals belong on a farm, too. When her son was a little baby, the farm always had a cow but since Charles' advent into boyhood there has been none — only pigeons, chickens and turkeys. Of these three types of fowl, the turkeys interest her the most. Raised scientifically in wire pens the flock of two gobblers, eight hens and about 24 young ones are fed large helpings of oats upon which they wax fat and strong.

One oat-fed turkey gobbler took a blue ribbon at Nantucket's poultry show last fall, much to Mrs. Folger's delight, while a White Rock rooster took another first. The pigeons she raises chiefly as a hobby and are mainly white kings and carneaus.

If the well-ordered peaceful acres of "Canopache" are the result of a life-long dream, Mrs. Folger did not say. Her childhood days were spent in West Haven, Conn., where she was born. Her father, Albert Chandler Coe, 11th in a direct line from the first English Coe to settle in the colonies, was for many years secretary and treasurer of the L. Candee Rubber Company. Mr. Coe was the first of three generations of Coe's to depart from the making of leather in the New Haven Company of Coe and Brown.

After graduation from the West Haven High School, Mrs. Folger who was one of a family of six, spent a year or two riding and relaxing in the family homestead before entering the West Philadelphia School for Nurses. She completed the course in three years, then on briefly at the hospital to serve as nurse in charge of the diet kitchen.

In 1919, she was asked to come to Nantucket Cottage Hospital in the capacity as assistant superintendent. She served the local hospital as head nurse for two years and three months and it was during that period that she met Dr. Folger.

Dr. Folger who was born in Charlestown and practiced six years in Boston following his graduation as an orthopedic surgeon from the Boston University returned to his family home because of his health.

They were married May 1, 1922 in Southbury, Conn., where her family had moved after the father's retirement from business. The busy years that followed presented a varied pattern: a brief period of nursing at the Island hospital, service during World War II on the Civilian Nurses Committee and home-making for her husband.

Mrs. Folger remembers particularly one episode of the war period. With others of the town she helped care for approximately 60 crew members of two English merchant ships which were torpedoed off Bermuda in 1942. Three boatloads of survivors, caught in the swift moving Gulf Stream, drifted near enough to the Island to be sighted by the Coast Guard. They were brought in by Coast Guard crews and taken to Bennett Hall, temporarily turned into a hospital, until arrangements were made to ship them to a naval hospital in Boston.

During the early years of her marriage, Mrs. Folger became adept in the art of cooking. Famous for reviving several of the older Island recipes, she is perhaps best known for her mince-meat made of fresh venison. Her generosity with this rich and spicy confection is well-known during holiday seasons — and local opinion concurs in its excellent quality and flavor.

#### Experiments with Herbs

Sitting in the stone flagged porch of the garden house, Mrs. Folger looks across her acres with pride and affection. "I have owned the farm for 11 years now," she says, "and I have brought it into good condition again. Now I look forward to developing the lines I have started."

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She referred to experiments with growing herbs to be used as savories in salads, fish and meat dishes. In recent years she has noted an increased interest in herbs and feels that Nantucket should be a natural for an herbal garden.

Another of her many plans for the fuller use of "Canopache" is a riding horse for her small son as well as a thoroughly equipped

play-yard of horizontal bars, rings, swings and other necessities for a growing boy. Dr. Folger, Mrs. Folger adds a little wistfully, enjoys the farm also but his days — and often nights — are so thoroughly occupied with medical duties his pleasure in the friendly outdoor life is strictly limited. When he is permitted a few hours for his own pleasure he "tinkers," Mrs. Folger explains, with great eagerness. Like most Nantucketers, he likes to patch and mend and rebuild—a craft ability he apparently inherited from his mother whose oil paintings hang on the walls of the farmhouse.

Peace does, indeed, exist on the hill over-looking the upper harbor, not only on the land but on the faces of those who dwell there. Mrs. Folger's contentment is obvious for she stays there until the snow flies in December, then leaves reluctantly to return to the India Street house.

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## PETTICOAT ROW

Nantucket Hospital Superintendent Finds  
Combination Of Work And Study Appealing  
By Alice B. Howard

Petticoat Row drops into the cheerful office of Miss Adelaid Gillies, Nantucket Cottage Hospital superintendent, veteran of approximately 20 years in the nursing profession as an instructor, director of nurses and superintendent of mainland hospitals, for a friendly chat.

A glance over a pot of flourishing African violets on a nearby window-sill to the wide, lavender-tinted view from the office windows suggests one excellent reason for Miss Gillies' serenity in her present surroundings. A lover of outdoors and growing things, she takes a quiet delight in her particular bit of Island during the rare moments she can pause to absorb it.

"I like Nantucket, the friends I have made and the people I have met. Someday when I am not so completely occupied I shall venture into a more active participation in Island doings."

By inclination and environment a student, Miss Gillies has spent a great deal of time in colleges, universities and hospital training classes developing her main interests of biology, anatomy, business nursing.

As a little girl living in a century-old house within sight of the Miramichi River near Chatham, New Brunswick, she lived a free, untrammelled, outdoor life. With two sisters and a brother for playmates, she fished and swam and collected bugs and butterflies and absorbed a rich background of fundamental knowledge.

The big, two-winged house now belongs to Miss Gillies and her brother, Robert, who still lives near the homestead. She savors to the full the realization that the house, full of memories, keepsakes of her childhood and family heirlooms is there when the years of active service will have come to an end.

### Schooled in New Brunswick

After graduation from the normal school in Fredericton, N. B. and a year of teaching in the local grammar school, Miss Gillies decided as her life initial training

course at the Lynn Hospital School of Nursing in Lynn. The superintendent at that time was Miss Annie R. Fletcher, a native of New Brunswick, one of several reasons for her choice. At cap-ping-time she was asked by the hospital authorities to remain as an instructor in anatomy and the nursing arts. Eager for the opportunity, she combined that year of hospital teaching with courses in education at Boston University.

This two-way method of working and learning at the same time she has managed frequently on a part-time basis. Thus she combined work and study at the Cortland Hospital in Cortland, N. Y. while assistant director of nurses with courses in economics at nearby Syracuse University.

She explains her dual attitude this way. "I feel the working just a little harder will keep me abreast of progressing educational theories in my on fields," she said. Then she added, "I was raised that way. My family enjoyed reading and discussion as much as we children loved the outdoors. Many of the business ideas I have heard my father argue with friends are as sound today as when I first heard them."

Miss Gillies' father, the late Alexander George Murray Gillies, came from a long line of scholars and historians from Dumfries, Scotland. Her maternal ancestors were among the original English settlers in the Miramichi River country and numbered scholars in the line. The first Mitchell received a grant of 100,000 acres of land from the English king with the stipulation he bring new families each year to settle the fertile valley.

Miss Gillies has bright memories of Summers spent in England with her Grandmother Mitchell when she was a little girl. No doubt, these early trips were largely responsible for the urge in her adult years to travel, not only in England again and in Europe but through the United States and down into Mexico.

During the years of World War II, Miss Gillies had a difficult task. Some of those years she was at Henry Haywood Memorial Hospital at Gardner as director of nurses and instructor of guidance courses which consisted of personal conferences with the incoming cadet nurses, helping them to become oriented to their new work. An average of 100 cadet nurses passed through her courses each year for three years.

### Worked in Lynn

Another phase of her war work took place at the Lynn Hospital to which she returned after several years absence. She organized and developed Red Cross Nursing classes in the Salem High School to such high standards that it was incorporated into the school curriculum as a full credit course. The success of this effort was so obvious, she was invited to give advance Red Cross Nursing instruction to high school teachers and to the business women of Salem. The three groups of students provided Miss Gillies with the one thing all conscientious nurses were looking for at that time—a recruiting media for nurses and nurses aides.

Miss Gillies, always eager to interest young people in the nursing profession, was approached at a recent Women's Hospital Auxiliary meeting by a community-minded woman who hoped to persuade her to introduce the hospital to the Nantucket Girl Scouts. Happy for the chance to further such cooperation, Miss Gillies suggested that in the Fall the Scouts might be shown movies and given informal talks on nursing and hospital management. "Furthermore," Miss Gillies said, "the girls might enjoy exploring the maintenance end of our hospital. And perhaps, if there is sufficient interest, seminar classes in patient care might be held."

A cooperative program of this type was one of her pet projects while at the Henry Haywood Memorial Hospital in Gardner. There she arranged for the girl scouts and each outgoing senior Senior class in the Gardner High School to view exhibits and watch demonstrations of nursing techniques as well as make trips through the wards and housekeeping departments.

A very human person in spite of a full professional life, Miss Gillies has several hobbies which she cultivates as time and circumstances allow. Gardening is one of these. While living in Gardner, she surrounded her own home with beds of gay, bright flowers. Here at the Cottage Hospital she is looking forward to developing a flower-edged court between the outside dining-room door and the nurses' home known as Gray Junior. With the many gifts of plants and perennials she has received from friends of the hospital she will add a well-planned touch of color to the grounds in front.

#### Collects Tiles

Her hobbies, however, do not stop with flowers. She collects tiles—small, gayly colored squares of hand-fashioned clay or porcelain. Her collection includes some from Mexico where she first became interested in them, England, France and Austria.

Perhaps of all her collections, she likes best a group of ten, sweet-toned bells gathered from many countries. Her favorite among them is a small bronze one made from a group which hung in the belfry of Christ Church in Fredericton, N. B. Cast in England, they were melted down after the church was destroyed by fire in 1911 and the smaller bells recast from the large ones were sold to help build a new church.

Miss Gillies' club affiliations reflect her several interests. She is a member of the Cortland College Club of New York, the Lynn Historical Society, the National Science Club, the National Association of Biology Teachers, the University Travel Club, the American Nurses Association and the National League of Nursing Education.

An active and trained mind plus a busy daily routine occupy the time so completely, Miss Gillies never feels remote or lonely on the misty Island far out at sea. She watches Island doings from the quietness of her hospital corner and wishes often that she might join more frequently in activities.

Mrs. Mc  
Grady

## Petticoat Row

### Riding Stable Owner Once Had Kentucky Race Horse

Merrily the sleighbells jingled up and down Nantucket's snow-filled streets this Winter to the rapid beat of a spotted pony's hoofs. In the driver's seat sat Mrs. John F. McGrady, dark eyes laughing out at the pedestrians who paused to watch the shell-shaped sleigh pass along the streets.

At present the Island's only year-round manager of riding stables, Mrs. McGrady, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry A. Larrabee, former owner of Pine Grove Farm, and a horse-lover for the last 32 years, now has 10 riding horses and three ponies.

Three years ago, Mrs. McGrady bought Nancy, a spotted brown and white Welch pony for her children, then added one called "Texas" for her own use. She did this with no thought of giving lessons or maintaining large stables but she was beset with demands to open one.

So she filled her stalls with riding horses and her time became fully occupied with lessons. Last Summer, with 19 horses in the big barn to the rear of the McGrady property on Hummock Pond road, Mrs. McGrady found it was impossible to make a reasonable profit, because of feeding costs.

"Even our present ten," she said, "consume an estimated ton and a half of hay a week plus liberal, daily rations of oats. If the time comes when I must buy off-Island," Mrs. McGrady said, "I'll have to pay \$43 for a ton of hay in New Bedford before I meet freight costs. I have to have the best quality of mixed timothy and clover if the horses are to be kept in first-class condition."

At one time there were four stables on the Island, one of which was the Nantucket Hunt Club. The others were run by the late William Wyer of Nantucket, William McCallon of Florida and by Mrs. McGrady's father, Mr. Larrabee. Riding was then, as it still is, a popular pastime for vacationists.

Mrs. McGrady was seven when her father gave her her first pony, a registered black Welch named Grove Negress. From that day, she has spent long afternoons riding horseback or driving along moor roads in a four-wheeled cart.

She is completely self-taught for she never had a lesson. "I simply rode until I understood how to handle a horse," she explained. "Later, of course, I read books on riding so that now I base my instruction on experience and book knowledge."

Her memories of those early rides hold one run-away story. While she was sitting in the pony cart with two other younger children, Grove Negress was frightened by a motorcycle, and stretching out his legs, galloped swiftly toward home. The young cyclist, scared by the sudden departure of cart and occupants turned and followed to help in case of an accident. The frightened pony, further unnerved by this, gathered greater speed until the children bounced dangerously in the cart.

On reaching the farm, the pony halted after seeing Mr. Larrabee but refused to let him out of sight until his fears had quieted and he no longer trembled.

Mrs. McGrady's next horse was a strawberry roan, "Roma," a racer who held an unbeaten track record on Nantucket. The dirt track at the old Fair Grounds was a quarter mile length and repeatedly the roan ran it in 59 seconds.

At the age of 16 and for the next four years she began to race her own horses and others at the horse shows of the Nantucket Cattle Shows and Fair where she had exhibited from the first year of riding. She rode regularly for John M. Clancy of Louisville, Ky., who brought racers to the Island every Summer for entry in the show. For four consecutive years she won a sterling silver trophy for placing best in the championship class.

During these same years she became the owner of "Bill Scully," a Kentucky racer which appeared with another horse named "Tex" in the Roman standing races, one of the features of Samuel Hall's troupe of trained animals. "Roman" standing races were run with the riders astride bareback while the horses galloped around the ring, one horse always trained to lose or to take secondary place.

March 26, 1948

After Mrs. McGrady took over the retraining of "Bill Scully," she determined to break him up of the habit of always placing second, for the next season she hoped to pit him in the ring against "Tex" with whom he had previously raced.

Long hours of careful schooling on the open moors gradually reduced "Bill" sufficiently so that he would leave a starting post with greater speed than the average racer. Therefore, the following year he was ready for his open trial. He successfully completed the race through the extra advantage gained from a quick getaway, winning by a full half-length.

Another peculiarity of the big racer was his dislike of men. Let a man approach to bridle or ride him and "Bill" was up on his haunches, striking out with his hoofs. Mr. Larrabee who tried one day to assist one of his younger daughters, during the absence of Mrs. McGrady, found that out. "Bill" kicked Mr. Larrabee on the chest, leaving a scar which he carried for a long while.

The Summer of 1926, Mrs. McGrady taught riding at her father's stables, co-owned with the late Byron Snow. Of those days, Mrs. McGrady said she was often so tired after 10 or 11 hours of teaching that she sometimes fell asleep at the wheel of her car driving home.

Following the death of Mr. Snow, the stable closed and Mrs. McGrady began to rent out her four horses and to give lessons from Pine Grove Farm. She continued this for several summers until in 1934 she married John F. McGrady of Middleboro. For the next eight years, Mr. and Mrs. McGrady made their home at Edgartown on Martha's Vineyard where the former was manager of a store.

Her greatest pleasure still comes from watching her young pupils display their training successfully. During last Summer's horse show at the Nantucket Hunting Stable, two of her twelve-year old pupils took prizes in the children's riding classes. They were Sally Williams, daughter of Mrs. Chamberlain Williams, who received a first prize and Gwendolyn Butler, daughter of Stanley Butler Jr., who took a second.

The clubhouse of the Nantucket Hunting Stable is now the home of Mrs. W. W. Trimpi of Pluckermine, N. J., who still brings hunters with her each Summer. Mrs. McGrady remembers as a child on her father's farm, members of the hunt club, traditionally attired in white

breeches and red coats, riding with packs of hounds. She recalls the high, thin sound of the bugle when it threaded the clear Nantucket air at the conclusion of the hunt.

The promoters of the Nantucket hunt were originally Gustavis, T. Kirby of New York and William Justice of Pennsylvania. Hunts still take place once or twice a week in the summer, but are much less elaborate, although just as much fun.

Mrs. McGrady's professional life never for a minute precludes thought of her home and family but her day-time hours are spent mostly on horseback. Her enthusiasm for teaching a younger generation of riders has never waned.

"Fine habits are built through learning to ride," Mrs. McGrady explained. "Control of yourself as well as of your horse. Poise and a good, natural posture are learned from correctly sitting on a horse." Then she smiled and said, "As for me, if I feel overtired or slightly nervous, a ride through the moors will strengthen me out always. I come back feeling relaxed and refreshed."

## Petticoat—

(Continued from Page 1)

of a farm homemaker without any great experience. A willingness to work and a natural aptitude, however, made her task easier.

In the meantime, her husband, a graduate of Amherst, tilled the big farm and conducted the dairy while she was busy with the duties of a farmer's wife and rearing three daughters.

When the Jaeckles acquired Gull Island Inn, they closed down the farm but Mr. Jaeckle still cultivates about 100 of the 250 acres and provides all the fresh vegetables (and until recently eggs and milk) for Gull Island Inn.

The story of the old house and the smooth-topped hill on which it stands is an interesting one. Originally the hill, home of countless gulls, was surrounded entirely by water and had an entrance gate and drawbridge at the southwest corner of the property near the converted barn. Some of the oldtimers recall seeing white sails moving slowly behind the hill on the area, then known as Lily Pond.

The present entrance to Gull Island on Center Street was the site of a dam over which poured water drained from the streets of the town and from springs in Wesco Pond, the original name of Lily Street. The water turned the wheel of a mill situated between Center and North Water Streets. It was, however, found insufficient in force to operate the mill adequately and the structure was taken down.

### House Built About 1700

There is some doubt as to which is the original house of Gull Island built about 1700. Some believe that a small cottage now standing at the entrance to Gull Island is the one.

The main house, still called "Gull Island" and built in 1736 was enlarged before 1800 and the central chimney replaced with five chimneys allowing for a total of 10 fireplaces throughout the old rooms. At that same time the roof was raised, the big kitchen added and the old kitchen turned into a dining room.

When the Reeds bought the house in 1929, oyster shell plaster still chinked the walls. The walls had been washed with yellow and green paint and the floor spattered in a swirl design. Some of the woodwork was natural but portions of it had been painted in cream. They added a servants wing, a laundry and put in dormer windows on

the third floor, thus allowing space for three extra finished rooms in what had been the old attic.

A single small cellar is under the new kitchen but a six-foot deep, round, bricked cellar with a dirt floor remains underneath the rear living-room. Entered through the floor of a closet it is unconnected with the other cellar. Presumably this was a vegetable and root cellar. But there have been stories extant that the curious bricked-in space had been used in early days either as a family shelter from the Indians or somewhat later as a wine storage cellar. Its exact use is, however, undetermined.

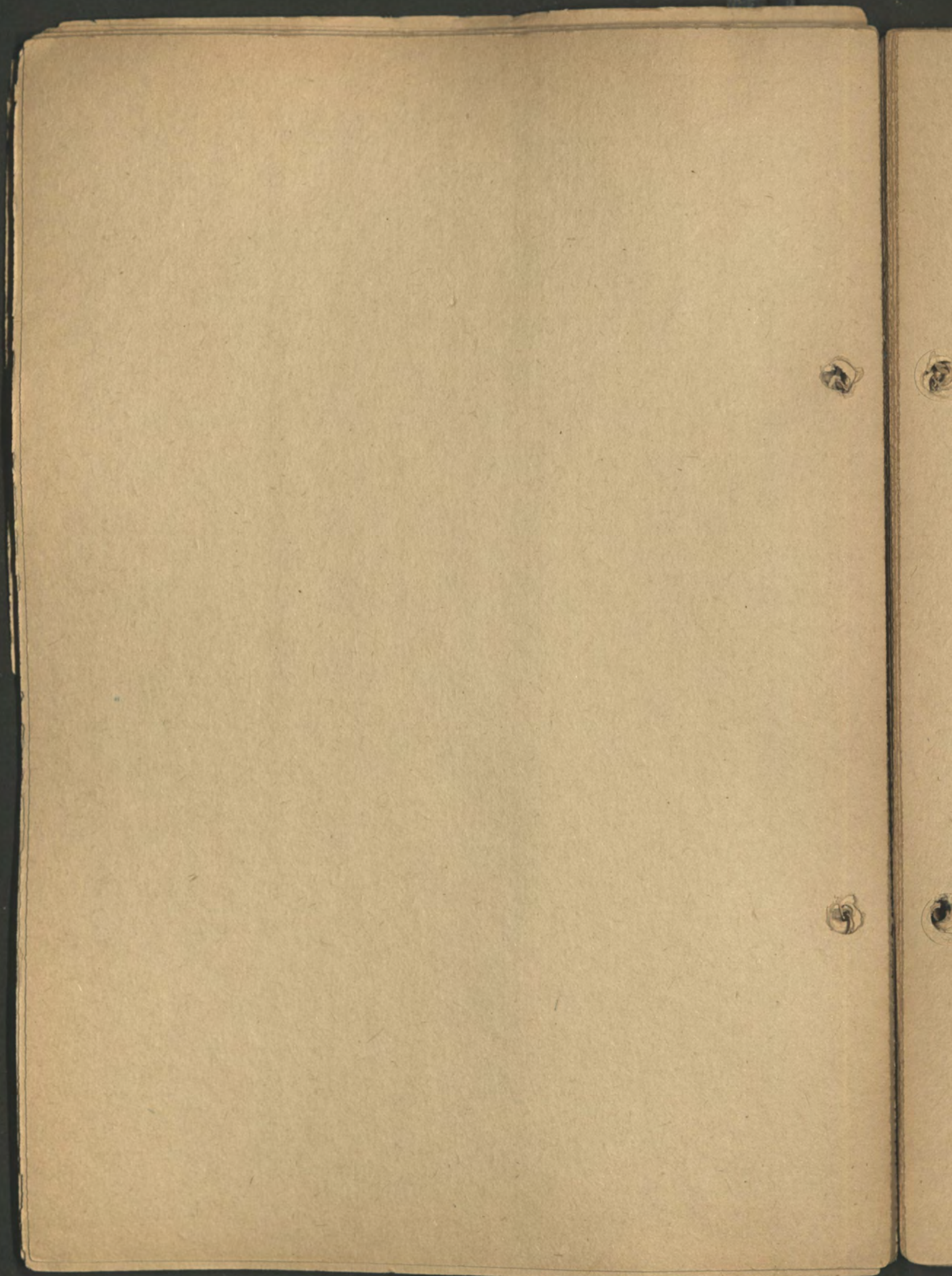
Like their mother, the Jaeckles' three daughters are growing into practical, competent citizens. Joan, now 18, each season drives a surrey for tourists drawn by her horse Mandy and after school hours helps her mother redecorate Gull Island Inn.

The next youngest, Jeanne, has helped out in the dining room during the past seasons but will do other work this summer. Jane, the youngest, still finds play important but manages to be of help to her father in the fields at planting time.

Competent and well-liked, Mrs. Jaeckle is an outstanding example in Petticoat Row. Transplanted from her home environment, she has thrived and developed under the kindly influences of the Island which became her permanent home. The success of Gull Island is due to a cooperative spirit which exists between her and Mr. Jaeckle.

Mrs. Jaeckle

May 14, 1948



## PETTICOAT ROW

By Alice B. Howard

Vivacious, brown-haired Gerda Kerr glanced up at her abstract oil painting of the Nantucket Unitarian Church, the brilliant whites of the upright spire laid against a dark, occasionally lighted background.

On a red-painted wheelbarrow a painting of white lilies, foliage handled in off-shades of lettuce green, was displayed face up. She smiled across the small gallery, formerly a garage, and explained, "I try to use my white space in an oil or water color somewhat the way a Chinese artist uses his. The painting area is approached with a minimum of brush strokes and paint. The white spaces thus appear as part of the composition, yet purely by the omission of paint rather than by application."

An artist whose oil and water color paintings have hung in the Milch Gallery on 57th Street in New York City, in the Junior League Art Show in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in Saunderstown, Rhode Island, and in the Roerich Art Center in Philadelphia, as well as locally Mrs. Kerr has also practiced commercial art, illustrated a book which popularizes cosmology by Dr. Fritz Kahn and taught privately in New York. Currently she and her able sculptor husband, Peter Kerr, direct and instruct in their own school located on Washington Street in Nantucket.

In the grey shingled studios, constructed from cranberry bog houses, they teach an increasing number of students oil painting, water color, sculpture, ceramics, silk screen, printing, lithography and etching techniques. The present school developed from a small sketching class held originally in the Summer of 1945.

Stimulated by the success of this group, Mrs. Kerr with her husband, planned the layout of the buildings, well-lighted by skylights to the North, and opened the school in July 1947. A year later it became an accredited G. I. school.

Mrs. Kerr has a confident expectation that the time is not far off when credits from the Kerr School will be accepted by mainland colleges and art schools toward degree work.

"I plan to introduce a course which I call an alertness course for art teachers. By that I mean a refresher course which will give them a chance to view objects and possible compositions with fresh interest and awareness of their artistic values."

Both Gerda and Peter Kerr have been exhibitors in Island art shows for several years. They were among the original group of artists, given space in one of the smaller exhibit rooms on the second floor of the Kenneth Taylor Galleries, during the opening week of the gallery in 1945.

## Regular Exhibitors Now

Since then, they have been regular exhibitors, both in the '45 and the open show. This season's gallery exhibits were opened with a joint showing by the Kerr's, as one of its featured attractions. Student work from the Kerr School was accepted by the gallery jury last season and received favorable comment from the art critic of the Herald Tribune.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schmid, now residents of Philadelphia, Pa., Mrs. Kerr crowded eventful years of life and study on the continent before coming to the United States, in 1924. At about the age of four when she left Scotland with her parents to live in Stuttgart, Germany, she first began to take a passionate interest in color, paints and crayon. She was happiest when she could settle down in a quiet corner, away from the noisier play of her brothers and sister, to sketch, draw and paint.

As a student in the Waldorf School, famous original unit of Dr. Rudolph Steiner's progressive system of teaching, she continued to plan and to dream with a steady single-mindedness of an art career.

Once established in Philadelphia she began to actively insist in the face of parental opposition on developing her obvious talents. She discovered during many arguments with her parents that they approved of art as a cultural asset but as a profession found it distasteful. "They seemed to feel," Mrs. Kerr said, "that all artists were long-haired and queer. And perhaps, too irregular in their personal habits."

Mrs. Kerr was, therefore, forced to further her plans not only by studying in both day and night classes but doing a good deal of free lance commercial art work. Eventually she entered the School of Industrial Art in Philadelphia and from there matriculated in the Temple University Tyler School of Fine Arts in Elkins Park, a Philadelphia suburb. At the end of three and one half years, Mrs. Kerr graduated with two degrees — a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Science in Education.

It was during the first year of study at the Tyler School that she met her future husband. Mr. Kerr, faithful to his family tradition, had completed two and one half years of pre-medical work at

Princeton University — then made the decision which diverted his entire career. He, too, would study art for as a child his major delight had been in clay, paints, crayons and paper.

## Met On Stage

They met while struggling to produce a little known play of Pirandello's to be produced by the students under the direction of young Mr. Kerr. The ambitious young woman was chosen stage manager. A first effort at collecting props, supervising rehearsals and lines, she managed so effectively she apparently won the young man's loyal regard almost overnight. They were married the following July in 1938.

They settled down in a small house in Oak Lane, a Philadelphia suburb, close to Elkins Park. During the next three years, they continued their studying at Tyler, also exhibiting in at least one downtown Philadelphia gallery — the Roerich Art center. Following their joint graduation, they moved to Cynwood on the Main Line while Mr. Kerr taught art at the Episcopal Academy and Mrs. Kerr continued to paint and work on commercial art.

With America's entrance into the war in 1941, the young couple were eager to utilize their abilities in effective service of some kind. A course at Bryn Mawr College in the art of map making by means of aerial photographs — known technically as photogrammetry — sent them flying to Washington. Mrs. Kerr immediately went to work for the marine design section of the engineering division of the Army Transportation Corps where she developed highly specialized blueprints relating chiefly to amphibious warfare as well as maps and planned battle actions well in advance of the events.

Life in the much discussed Pentagon Building was lively, secret and under continual investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which placed an approval stamp on all personnel. Mrs. Kerr, in talking of the building, said, "It was a pure example of functional building. Distances re-

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ported to be so much greater than necessary, worked out practically to be much less because of its construction. Any office anywhere could be reached in half the time usually taken in the average office building because of the layout."

Because her particular department worked in advance of events, Mrs. Kerr and her husband, also busy on war projects were able to leave Washington before the final days of the war. They went immediately to New York in order to reestablish themselves as professional artists and to develop contacts with agents and others in their field.

Their personal plans, maturing at that time, have continued to the present. Mrs. Kerr takes private art students and holds small classes in their studio apartment while Mr. Kerr is the art instructor at the Browning School for Boys on East 52nd Street.

#### Longer Terms Planned

Present plans relating to the Nantucket School, in addition to its curricular development, include the expectation of a longer school term for she and her husband hope to make the Island their permanent home. Another angle of realizing improved school facilities is a plan to build a dormitory for their students — especially for the single girls who often find it hard in the busy resort to locate inexpensive rooms.

As teachers, Mrs. Kerr said, she and her husband will continue to base school instruction on individual training. "By this method," she explained, "students develop their own artistic discipline. It is not a discipline superimposed arbitrarily by us as teachers."

The curriculum consists of morning lectures on color, form, composition and other subjects. Finished work is then discussed and suggestive criticism given by the Kerrs for its improvement. Then, she continued, the students go in groups to the harbor, to the moors, or other paintable locations in town for daily sketching.

The Kerrs are now in the process of renovating an old house on Back Street, bought a year ago, and because of their extremely busy days, still uncompleted. Much of the work such as refinishing floors, placing ceilings and painting they do themselves.

They are accustomed to this type of work for some years ago they purchased an unfinished shack in Putnam County in New York state — a lovely piece of country combining gently rolling countryside with big gray rock formations — and completed the building themselves.

They are aided in their present art school by two competent young women — Miss Cynthia Read of Worcester and Miss Rita Willard, a permanent Summer resident of the Nantucket colony who is now in charge of the art supply store. Mrs. Kerr speaks of Miss Read as "my man Friday who acts as my first assistant relieving me of many routine details."

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## Petticoat Row

### Descendant Of Original Island Settler Is Cabinet Maker, Artist And Craftsman

An English poet once said, "The world is too much with us, 'Getting and spending we lay waste our power.'"

To Miss Aletha Macy, Island cabinet maker, craftsman and artist, tenth generation in direct line from Thomas Macy, these words have an honest significance. The world is often so little with her, that she plans a delicate piece of wood-carving with full knowledge that it will take her more than 250 working hours to finish it. And in those working hours she does not figure the time spent in drawing the designs to scale before transferring them to wood.

"The hours I must spend on the designs are perhaps the hardest. Recently my eyes have gone back on me and if I follow medical orders exactly I'll work only an hour a day at my drawings," she said. "That slows up the progression of my work dreadfully."

Miss Macy spread a drawing of lacy pattern out on the floor of her living room, a paneled room with overhanging beam and satiny floors on which she has spent many hours of work.

"I began this kind of wood carving about ten years ago," she said. "The designs are from the Polynesians. The work is called chip carving. I develop the patterns from basic angles of a diamond shape, a circle or a square—all motifs used by the Polynesians."

#### Bladed Tool Used

Several rectangular boxes of Mahogany which she laid on the floor beside the drawings had delicate geometric designs worked on them. The only tool which Miss Macy uses for this kind of woodwork is a short, stout-handled instrument with a removable blade. She often breaks several blades during a working session.

"This tool chips away the tiny wedge shaped pieces which release the design from the wood," she said. "Each of these tiny lines," and she placed her finger on three fine, black lines on the drawing which formed an odd shaped triangle, "require three single chips in order to make this one unit."

While Miss Macy initiated herself into the fine wood-carving which finds such a ready market among both Islanders and Summer residents her training in cabinet-making came directly from Lincoln Ceeley, the Island's well-known 82-year-old cabinet maker.

From the time she was 11 years old, Miss Macy and Mr. Ceeley have worked side by side at his work bench in the old shop on Vestal street. Her mother, Mrs. Charles H. Macy, often called her small daughter destructive because she spent many hours hammering nails into the floors of the Hiram Folger homestead on Upper Main Street, now owned by Mrs. Louise E. Glass, then the home of the four Macy children and their parents.

But the urge to hammer was hard to curb in the small girl. Whittling and building was a continuous spare time occupation until she passed her 11th birthday. Then she began to help Mr. Ceeley paint his "Happy Jack" sailor boy weather-vanes. Recognizing a latent craftsman, the cabinet-maker encouraged and suggested and worked with her until at 15 she made a "Martha Washington" mirror for her mother as a gift on her 40th wedding anniversary.

#### Craft Ability Inherited

Miss Macy believes her craft

ability comes from both the Macy and the Dunham sides of her family. Her mother's brother, Franklin Dunham, of the old carpenter firm of Wire and Holmes, situated on Lower Main Street, was a cabinet-maker who made many pieces of fine furniture. But her father used to tell her that the Macys also were hand-minded and capable.

"I only know that I could never resist wood. I liked to touch it and work with it," Miss Macy said. "The training Mr. Ceeley gave me couldn't have been better for everything I did had to be exactly right. Something only half-right was never good enough for him. And I always have been grateful that he kept my standards high."

Excellent examples of Miss Macy's cabinet work are in several private homes on the Island. Mr. and Mrs. S. Leo Thurston of Liberty Street own a lyre table, a small desk, a canthus leaf mirror, an exquisite grandmother's clock and a carved full-rigged clipper ship laid against an oil-painted background, all done by Miss Macy. The hull of the ship is ebony, its sails holly wood.

In the office of Miss Gladys Wood on India Street there hangs a spread-winged duck mounted on a pine panel, the work of Miss Macy. But her choicest work, a lovely tambour desk in unstained mahogany, inlaid with satin and holly woods, stands in the living room of Walter Coffin.

Her own living room holds a Pembroke table of her making as well as an old maple and mahogany chest and several chairs she has rubbed down until the fine veining of the wood glows richly.

The snug, two-roomed house is itself an outstanding example of her painstaking wood-working instinct. Originally planned for housing chickens, an enthusiasm of her father's later years, Miss Macy rebuilt it, with the help of Reginald Hussey, following Mr. Macy's death in 1945.

#### House Built Of Old Boards

Except for the floors, the house is constructed entirely of wide, old boards, many of which came from the Folger barn, damaged during a hurricane. The central beam which runs the full length of the house is her particular pride. Because of an early childhood association, that beam is almost like a member of her family.

As a venturesome child of four, Miss Macy crept on her hands and knees from the sheltering haymow in the Folger barn along this same beam when it stood 15 feet above the ground, the main support of the building. About half way across a dreadful feeling of fear paralyzed her. She was unable to move either backward or forward and was barely able to shout for help.

Hearing the frantic call, Mrs. Macy rushed out to where the child clung, suspended above the barn floor. Bidding the child to stay there for a minute, she returned with a rocking chair and a book and sat down underneath her. Then she said,

"Aletha, listen. You will be safe if you stay right there quietly. I will sit and read until father comes in from the fields. Then he'll swing a ladder up and carry you down. Don't be afraid—and listen, 'Once upon a time—'"

The mother's confidence calmed the child. The stories held her attention. She lay on the beam, safe and secure, until some hours later her father hoisted up the ladder and brought her down to safety. In telling the story, Miss Macy said she would never forget the picture of her mother, rocking serenely and reading to her while she forgot to be afraid.

#### Is Also A Painter

The walls of the living room are hung with oil paintings by Miss Macy. One of these is an interior, enlarged from a post card, of the fireplace which stood in the old Ichabod Coffin House on Washington Street. Another is a painting of the Nathan B. Palmer in full sail, similar to the one hung at the Kenneth Taylor Galleries in the Summer of 1946. One of 50 paintings chosen from 100 submitted, the Nathan B. Palmer received excellent critical comment and was bought by Henry A. L. Sand of New York and Nantucket.

Another of the craft secrets learned from Mr. Ceeley was glass-painting, an art which is dying out in this modern age. There are two others, at present living on the Island, who work on glass in addition to Mr. Creeley and herself, Miss Macy said. They are Wallace Long, curator of the Whaling Museum and Harry Allen, a sign-painter.

Always the artist, Miss Macy has one other major interest with which she shares her time. Since girlhood, she has loved horses and delighted in riding and working with them. Among her happiest memories are moor rides on "Jack," a real Western pony she owned, accompanied by Mrs. Clara McGrady. She and Mrs. McGrady were often out on the old race track at the Fairgrounds, racing their horses in high glee.

Because of a serious back injury some 15 years ago, Miss Macy can no longer ride. She is, however, the caretaker of Colonel Stacy Knopf's two thoroughbred racers and the paddock and stables are conveniently nearby to Miss Macy's home on Lowell Place.

In inseparable friend, Lady Christina, a thoroughbred black cocker, once the daily companion of Mr. Macy, follows her mistress from door to chair to work room, out to the stable and back again.

Of a modest, retiring disposition, Miss Macy goes her quiet way creating loveliness with brush or knife. She does not hesitate to admit her deep affection for Nantucket and her family who are in and out of the small house frequently. She has two married sisters on the Island, Mrs. Seddon Legg and Mrs. Royal Appleton, both of whom live on Orange Street. Her brother, Francis Macy, is now in Gloucester.

Perhaps in the Summer season "The world is too much" with Miss Macy when visitors come to see her work and talk with her but when the longer nights draw in, when the visitors return to their "getting and spending," Miss Macy relaxes and settles into a working routine. Full of an engaging vigor and warming hospitality the hours pass swiftly in the little house, as friends gather about the fireplace and talk ranges far and wide.

## Petticoat Row

Ellen Ramsdell

Where Center Street crosses Chester Street and curves up the hill toward the Cliff there stands on the right a small yellow and white-trimmed house laid snug against the slope. The number is 67.

This is the home of Miss Ellen L. Ramsdell, supervisor of music in the Nantucket Schools since 1930, the contralto member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church choir for the last eighteen years and an active leader in choral and other musical work in the community.

As a child, Miss Ramsdell showed ability along musical lines although, beyond taking part in occasional variety shows with other children, she received no more musical experience or Hartford, under William L. Whitney and his assistant, Miss Elma Iglemann.

### Becomes Music Instructor Here

She gained considerably in musical stature and maturity during these years but slowly a realization grew on her. She was homesick for Nantucket—for the free, outdoor life of her Island home and for her friends and family. In 1930, she returned to the Island with the idea of taking one solid year of rest and relaxation before embarking on another position. Her one year here has turned into 18 for when offered a position in the Nantucket schools, similar to the Bristol one, she accepted gladly.

Immediately she joined the choir of St. Paul's, which had been her church since childhood, and settled down to develop what latent talents lay among her students in the schools.

Her work consisted chiefly of training each class from the first grade through senior high school in voice and inculcating, meanwhile, a certain amount of musical theory in students. But during the Spring of each school year she usually began rehearsals for concerts, cantatas or light operettas. Occasionally, as in the May and Spring Festival of 1939, she would work with Mrs. Mary Walker, instructor of the Spoken Word and the Drama, in combining one-act plays with concerts by the Nantucket High School chorus.

"The Romance of Cinderella" with the score based on music by Mozart was one of the light operas dramatized and sung by students of the Junior High School. "Jewels of the Desert" was another of the early productions.

But the most successful of the operettas were some of those by Gilbert and Sullivan with the dramatization supervised by Mrs. Walker and the stage sets created by Richard C. Maloney, then art supervisor. Miss Ramsdell spoke highly of Mr. Maloney's interest and ability. "He had an unusual flair for stage sets," she said, "and while he was here our staging was notable."

### Performances Were Hits

Produced in the auditorium of the Cyrus Peirce School, the townspeople flocked to enjoy the lively performances. The cast of "Pinafore" put on in the Spring of 1937, included Irene Paradis, Claire Morin, Marguerite Roche, Robert Paradis, Richard Collis, Ralph DeGraw, Francis Gomes and Joseph Visco, Jr. Mr. Visco, Miss Ramsdell smilingly recalled, was outstanding for the pure enjoyment he showed for his part. He sang with enthusiasm and acted with a fine sense of controlled humor.

The following season, Miss Ramsdell and the music department put on "Pirates of Penzance" and then a year later "The Mikado." Another popular production was "Robin Hood and His Merry Men" with the musical score of Paul deKoven.

The Nantucket High School band, which has sometimes seemed to hold a step-child position in relation to other school activities, came under Miss Ramsdell's direct supervision after a teacher from the mainland completed a season's instructions, then failed to return the next Fall. Miss Ramsdell, who understands the theory of instruments but not the practice of them except the piano, had attended rehearsals during that Winter the mainland director had struggled to the Island through the storms and the intermittent boat schedule. Nevertheless, she felt somewhat at a loss when forced to do the teaching by herself.

She managed, however, to keep the band together until in 1943 George Gage Grob, teacher of mathematics and principal of the Junior High School, came to her assistance. He knew considerably more than she did about the playing of brasses and woodwinds, she said, with the result that band-playing improved. Mr. Grob is now a professor of English at Boston College.

After Mr. Grob's departure two years ago, the band laid away its instruments until this season when Mrs. Leroy True, organist of the First Congregational Church, became the new director.

### Students Make Good

Miss Ramsdell has followed the careers of three of her students with genuine interest. One in particular has accomplished a great deal with practically no outside instruction in his chosen field, the organ.

James Wood, son of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Wood, now returned to his organ study at the Longy School of Music at Cambridge after two years in the service, credits Miss Ramsdell with his initial push into his life work.

"All I've learned about music, I've learned from you," the young James told Miss Ramsdell one day when she discovered him playing hymns on the piano in St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He began as a choir boy and acolyte in the church when he was about 11. He apparently listened attentively to all his music supervisor said, and thus was stimulated to try out the theories on the piano. He would try to figure out hymn tunes while waiting for choir rehearsals to begin.

In the same way, Miss Ramsdell continued proudly, she found him one day at the organ testing carefully each part before he played bits of melodies and fragments of hymns. Knowing little about the organ herself she encouraged him to persist in his own way, realizing that he was giving himself fundamental instruction.

After graduation from High School he was admitted to the Longy School with some amazement by the faculty, for his entry blank read "self-taught." He majored in organ and his teacher was E. Power Biggs, well known organist. The draft temporarily removed him from his music concerns although, while stationed in Salsburg, Austria, he studied at the Mozartium, a famous music academy.

In addition to resuming his studies at the Cambridge school, Mr. Wood is now organist at the Church of the Good Shepherd at Nashua, N. H.

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Two other Nantucket students, under the friendly enthusiasm of Miss Ramsdell, have been encouraged to continue with their musical studies. Richard Collis, graduate of the High School, is now developing his fine baritone voice under instruction in Baltimore, Maryland. Miss Charlotte Jones, class of 1946, is at the New England Conservatory in Boston taking the course in public school instruction.

#### Born In Madaket

Miss Ramsdell was born in Madaket and, with a natural feeling for that village, admits to a persisting interest in its people and welfare. Driving along Nantucket roads, she will, through some power beyond her control, wind up in the cluster of houses located just back and to the side of Smith's Point. "Even though I start out on my bike for another destination," Miss Ramsdell admitted with a sidelong twinkle, "Somehow I end in Madaket. I left there when I was about two to come into town to my grandfather Sylvaro's home and live with my mother—yet I have a special feeling for Madaket."

Her father was Edgar W. Ramsdell, son of the late Warren Ramsdell, who met his death tragically in 1902 when he tried to save his fishing boat from the frozen waters of Madaket Harbor. Unable to break the ice which locked the boat securely, Mr. Ramsdell tried to remove the sails and gear. Failing in this he started back toward shore in his dory, only to meet a swift-running tide which carried him through the break in Smith's Point and out to the open sea. A watcher from the shore followed him helplessly and was the last to see the small boat disappear in the frigid, turbulent water beyond.

Mrs. Ramsdell, who was Miss Elizabeth Ella Sylvaro, with her young daughter moved into the Center Street home to live with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Enos Sylvaro.

Mr. Sylvaro was one of the last of the whalers, making his final trip in the "Alice Bradford." Upon retiring from the sea, he originated an idea still utilized by Lincoln Ceeley, cabinet maker. He whittled from hard wood clever figures of sailors, whales, Indian warriors and braves in canoes to be used as weather vanes. He worked in an old shop building behind the house on Center street where his granddaughter now has her garden. No doubt, many of the older residents among the Summer families recall Mr. Sylvaro bent over his workbench, busy with knife and wood, for many off-Islanders visited the shop and bought the amusing vanes.

Here in the house her grandfather bought in 1863 and for which, according to the words of the deed, he paid \$150, Miss Ramsdell grew up. From the lattice-covered doorway she would run errands for her mother and grandmother to the North Shore grocery store, managed at that time by W. R. Cathcart. Winters she swung out along the road toward Lily Pond, skates over her shoulder for an afternoon's fun. She has never known another home and she is still content there with her uncle, Byron Sylvaro, who lives with her.

#### Has Affection For Old House

Here affection for the house has led her to search for the date and original builder. She believes it is an unrecorded house or else one entered in books destroyed by the fire of 1846. However, she feels fairly certain that it is older than many others in the neighborhood. "Perhaps," she commented, "it was one of the houses carried in from the old town of Sherburne." Beams, hardware and floors, all in good condition, indicate age. The stairs, normally appearing in the small, square front halls of the old houses, are in the rear of this one. "I love the house," she added, "and whether it is that old or not, enjoy living in it."

Furnished suitably with many pieces of family furniture of an early period, Miss Ramsdell pointed out a square, hard pine table with legs which flair slightly and grow slenderer as they near the floor. This is one of several pieces refinished this Winter by Miss Ramsdell.

Originally covered with layers of old stain and paint, she did not realize what a fine table she had, until under the guidance of Mrs. Earl Ray, instructor in the Adult Education wood-finishing course, its beauties were uncovered.

By the side of the table stands a small, old Windsor chair, also of hard pine and also refinished by Miss Ramsdell. In the living-room to the left is an old curved-back mahogany chair, another of her Winter's accomplishments. This one gave her rather more trouble for it began to disintegrate as she worked. However, careful gluing returned the graceful lines to their rightful place and the chair, completed, is sturdy and useful once more. She also refinished an old sea chest and a very old knife box.

Miss Ramsdell's other hobbies, several of which go back to childhood days, are ice-skating on Lily Pond, swimming, sailing and gardens. This latter enthusiasm grew from schooldays when Miss Anna G. Swain would sell to the

classes penny packets of flower seeds. She would urge the children to take them home and plant their own gardens.

#### Has Lovely Garden

Among those who accepted the idea with real ardor was Miss Ramsdell. Her interest, however, matured into her adult life until today her garden to the rear of her house glows with flowers from the first Spring crocuses to the late blooms of the Fall. For the last eight or nine years she has specialized in bulbs, dividing and transplanting old bulbs and adding new varieties annually. Each Spring her garden is alive with a wide border of brilliant hyacinths.

A thoroughly integrated personality, Miss Ramsdell's quiet friendliness is guaranteed to make a stranger feel at home. She talks with an easy directness about her interest and her life, not failing to mention a companion of 17 years, Jefferson Davis, commonly known as Jeff. Jeff, a black cocker spaniel, feels the weight of his years these days but Miss Ramsdell still enjoys his youth in retrospect.

In addition to her choir singing, Miss Ramsdell's community music interest expanded this winter to include a part in a double quartet, organized by Howard Barber of Academy Lane. Others in the group of eight voices are Mr. and Mrs. Barber, Dr. H. Brooks Walker, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Bond, Mrs. True and Edouard A. Stackpole. They have prepared and given before organizations on the Island a pleasing group of old French and English carols.

The double-quartet, Miss Ramsdell said, hopes to continue practicing this Spring, enlarging their repertoire to include old madrigals. Two of Miss Ramsdell's other interests are the Candle Light Guild and the Coffin School. But her life is quite complete with her music, teaching, gardening and outdoor fun in the water and walking or bicycling along Island roads.

## Petticoat Row

Local Chief Operator Has Been Employee  
Of Telephone Company for Last 32 Years

In 1916 Miss Gladys Ray, only five months out of the Nantucket High School, joined the Nantucket Telephone Company, subsidiary office of the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company.

Petticoat Row, 32 years later, climbs the trim stairway of the Telephone building on Union street, to put on earphones and listen in on Miss Ray, now chief operator and instructor under the direction of her supervisor, Mrs. Geraldine Murphy.

Sitting in the attractive, chintz-clad lounge room on the second floor, Miss Ray related that during the Summer season, 11,000 local calls a day are put through the 21 Nantucket circuits of the company, eight of which are micro-wave circuits between the Island and the mainland. In addition, the operators place 525 "station to station" toll calls daily on the "A" board—the board which carries local calls.

Through June, July, August and September, she added, 21 operators are busy plugging in and out the routine calls while she concentrates on watching the service, instructing the girls at their work and handling complaints.

The average complaints occur, Miss Ray believes, because of a natural human impatience for an immediate connection. School-ed in patience and fair-mindedness herself, Miss Ray feels this condition would be improved if telephone subscribers could visualize the entire process of making a call.

Using a homily comparison, she said, "Recently customers in the markets and chain stores had to wait unreasonable lengths of time—but they managed to control their impatience because they were able to see the lines from beginning to end. In making a telephone call, they are unable to see the others who form the line—an invisible one to be sure—on the boards here in the office. Naturally, impatience mounts and sometimes tempers let go."

The chief "jams" on the boards occur in the Summer except on occasional winter days when the "no school" whistles blasts mothers and children to attention. Then the switchboard is temporarily swamped with calls—mothers trying to verify the blasts, children making hurried dates for the afternoon play.

### Operators Aid Children

Children are an occasional source of trouble to telephone operators, Miss Ray admitted, although if a child is making an uncertain but honest effort to reach his mother, the operator will always assist him. Sometimes the light flashes on the board and a timid voice will say, "Please I want my mother." The operator immediately asks where the mother is. The answering child is just as apt to say "Across the street" or "Down at grandma's." With this slim information, the operator will plug in at several numbers until she finds the missing mother.

Miss Ray believes firmly that children, old enough to use the telephone, should be instructed in its use. Frankly fond of children, she smiles when she says "I am Auntie Glad to many on the Island." One of her young friends asked one day, "Auntie Glad, do you know all the telephone numbers? And all the voices too?" Her answer was perfectly honest, "Not all but a good many." One day when this particular little girl gave a number on the telephone, Miss Ray who happened to be on the board responded with a "Hi, Anne. I'll get it for you." The little girl was delighted at being recognized without being seen.

One of three girls and a boy born to the late Mr. and Mrs. Lewis S. Ray, Miss Ray has rarely left the Island except for vacations and to attend telephone conferences which formerly were held in Boston, Prov-

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idence, New Bedford, and Hyannis. One Summer, when the Vineyard Haven exchange on Martha's Vineyard was short of help, she spent the Summer as an operator there.

Admittedly "scared to death" the first day on duty, Miss Ray learned quickly because she enjoyed her work so much. She still spends her off-hours on constant telephone study, chiefly to keep herself informed about new routines, new methods of handling telephone records and new ideas for class instruction.

The new girls, under the friendly tutelage of Miss Ray, are taught right on the boards although for the first few days they are not connected with the outside. At the end of two weeks, she has trained the new operators sufficiently so they are able to handle calls properly.

#### Trained First 'Sconset Operators

In 1929, Miss Fay trained the operators for the new telephone exchange at Siasconset. They were the late Mrs. Doris Coffin Handy, Mrs. Allen Holdgate and Kenneth Eldridge.

The first Nantucket telephones were installed, Miss Ray recalled, in the Weather Bureau, then housed on Orange street. The next office was on Main street somewhere in the vicinity of Snow and Bennett market. When Miss Ray first joined the company, the exchange had moved to Fair street in the building now occupied by Mary Belle's shop. In 1929, the present modern building was completed with excellent facilities to care for the large volume of calls and the needs of the employees.

While it was situated on Fair street, she recalled, "a sleeping companion" for the night operator was hired to prevent the latter from being frightened or lonely. That odd feature was discontinued when the new office was established.

In November 1941, the office staff gave Miss Ray a 25th anniversary "surprise" party—a genuine surprise, she said laughingly, for she attended in her old working smock. Given at the home of Mrs. Arthur Newcomb, her associates presented her with a handsome antique mahogany mirror, a reproduction of a very old one made by Wallace Long, curator of the Whaling Museum.

Miss Ray's success in her chosen work is based on one primary quality. Through the pleasing tones of her voice, her personality comes along the wire to the subscriber as friendly, honest and sincere—characteristics which are fundamental in Miss Ray.

#### Member of Several Organizations

An active member of the Harmonious Hustlers and the Sherburne Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, she has been associated for many years with the First Congregational Church. For approximately 15 years she taught the second year primary class in the Sunday School and was financial secretary of the church from about 1933 to 1947.

When Miss Ray is not busy being one of Nantucket's favorite telephone "voices" she is busy with her knitting and is at the moment struggling with the countless bobbins and strands of colored wool neces-

sary to produce one pair of Argyle socks.

Petticoat Row slipped the ear phones off regretfully preparatory to leaving the restful lounge room. Miss Ray had ceased to be a pleasing impersonal voice. Instead she had become a flesh and blood creature, practically *intimate* in Nantucket and her countless friends of both a wire and home variety.

## PETTICOAT ROW

### Leader In Adult Education On Island Is Also Girls' Confidant

Petticoat Row riding the corkscrew road toward the North and West reflects inwardly on the unique combination of natural beauty and barrenness which is Madaket known to the Indians as the "bad lands".

The Summer home of Mrs. Earl Ray, Coffin School teacher, secretary of the Adult Education Committee, since 1943, mother of two grown children and wife of the commander of the Sidney and Robert Henderson Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, looks through wide, clear windows into the sunset colors. The desolate flatlands barely touch the boundaries of the Ray's land.

The well-kept lawn surrounding the attractive shingled house built by Mr. Ray, the flowers and the narrow stretch of quiet harbor have become, through the years, elements woven into the personality of Mrs. Ray. Her face shines with a genuine affection when she looks at the serene house and water.

"Originally," she said, "We never planned a large bay like that one. But it seemed important to watch the sunset from within the house as well as from the lawn. So now I have a picture window."

The house itself shines with order and comfort. A large square room added to the rear after the birth of their son, Robert Morris, in 1925, has built-in ship's bunks — larger, however, than ordinary ones — and became a playroom for the children. Now used by Mr. and Mrs. Ray, it is still festooned with model planes, old guns and a model of an early mackerel fishing boat, made by the late Jesse Eldridge. It is closed reluctantly each Fall when they return to town for the opening of school.

A graduate of Framingham Normal School in 1918, Mrs. Ray approaches her high school classes at Coffin School intelligently, well aware that sewing and cooking, her two all-over subjects, are basic necessities for the students. In addition, she teaches applied courses in the same subjects to seventh and eighth grades, but theory is reduced to a minimum.

Approximately 16 students enter her classes as freshmen each Fall but by their Junior year this number has been reduced to about four. The others have elected a commercial course as a major. With her fewer students Mrs. Ray is, however, able to give them individual attention and training. In the last two years this training included the fundamentals of family relationships and child care as well as the rudiments of menus, house management and living allowances.

### Is Girl's Confidant

"My smaller group of girl's," Mrs. Ray said, "becomes almost an extension of my own family group. I often become their confidant, trusted with personal problems, sometimes of a romantic or emotional nature for which they can find no help elsewhere. I grow to love and understand them all — and by graduation time I hate to see them leave."

Wise in the ways of practical living, Mrs. Ray is a valued friend of the girls. She does not, however, limit her experienced knowledge to the girls alone. During Winter evenings when Nantucket rocks to Northeast winds, cold and snow, Mrs. Ray further develops her own philosophy of competence in those who attend the adult education classes.

This past Winter there were five of these classes — upholstering, caning, rushing and two in refinishing furniture. With an enrollment of between 12 to 15 these courses are essentially sound for they emphasize use and care of tools as well as honest, careful workmanship. Some students go out sufficiently equipped in their new skills to add to their weekly income through application of what they have learned. Others, suddenly aware that a table, chair or chest, long neglected, might be transformed to new beauty, work at home.

"Of course, there are always a few who approach the hard work involved with the dilettante's point of view," Mrs. Ray said. "These quickly weed themselves out when they realize how much time and effort goes into re-upholstering one small slipper chair or one bedside table. The serious and willing workers are not discouraged — they make the best students."

The background of adult education in Nantucket, as told by Mrs. Ray, is an interesting example of a small group eventually influencing an entire town. A year or two previous to 1943 several persons, among them Frederick Hill, Mrs. Elias J. Lyon and Mr. Ray realized that Nantucket needed to be sparked creatively — if its old-time reputation of hand-mindedness was to continue alive. They organized loosely into a group known as the Nantucket Craftsmen with the idea of revitalizing a few of the old crafts. Many were interested — but perhaps because of war tensions, little was done in a practical way.

### On Committee Since 1943

Mrs. Ray stepped onto the committee in 1943 when her husband who had also participated in World War I and son went into service — and by Fall of that year both state and town allocations had been received to organize adult education classes. She has remained through the five year period as secretary while Mr. Hill continues as president with Mrs. Lyon remaining on the committee, and Mr. Ray reappointed upon his return to Nantucket.

Tremendously pleased with the enthusiasm with which the courses are received and their rapidly growing attendance, Mrs. Ray has hopes for further curricular development. "The classes have proven a wonderful thing for the town," she says.

The daughter of Benjamin F. Williams and Susan Coffin Appleton Williams, Mrs. Ray was born on Darling Street. Her father whose boyhood coincided with the last of the great whaling days went to sea at 14 as cabin boy under Captain Charles Grant, then after his return settled down to become a first-class mason.

Mrs. Ray received her early training during her four years at the Nantucket High School, from where she graduated in 1915, in sewing and manual training. At that time, manual training classes were taught by Frank W. Woodlock whose instruction was intensive and broad. By the time she was 17, she had completed a mahogany desk and outfitted it with a chip-carved desk set, all accomplished with hand tools.

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Boht Mr. Woodlock and Alvin E. Paddock, also a teacher at the school, set unusually high standards for their young people.

After completion of the household arts at Framingham in 1918, Mrs. Ray taught for six brief months in Lancaster. Then she returned to her hometown for five and one half years of teaching at the Coffin School.

#### Bought Old House

In 1921, she and Mr. Ray, at that time planning their future life together, bought an old run-down house at 27 Fair Street. The house had no electricity only one small lavatory and a kitchen hand-pump. She and her future husband, then an apprentice to Arthur Nocross, spent the next three years remodeling and renovating the old house until in 1924 after a mainland honeymoon they stepped into the modernized home which they had created and paid for themselves. Unwittingly, perhaps, Mrs. Ray thus became the supreme example of the practical romantic, able through her own satisfactory experience to guide young people in their own behavior as they passed from her classes into marriage and homes of their own.

After her marriage, Mrs. Ray retired briefly from active teaching to concentrate on home and children. During these years she served four years as president of the Harmonious Hustlers and of the Auxiliary of the Byron L. Sylvario Post of the American Legion and, as chairman of the girl scout organization. She is still a member of the group's executive board.

In spite of her currently full days of teaching, she is still an active member of the North Congregational Church and its many gatherings as well as the local parent-teacher organization. She is also a member of the Independent Lodge of the Rebekahs of Brockton.

She finds little time for hobbies but when she can manage to squeeze them into her schedule, she enjoys particularly gardening in the Summer and hooking rugs during the Winter evenings — never as long nor as empty as the off-Islander seems to think.

For a person with such manifold interests and a disciplined mind, time is never long enough. There is often greater difficulty, Mrs. Ray comments, in freeing time for the number of things to be both accomplished and enjoyed. "Even here in our Summer home, on the edge of Madaket Harbor where Mr. Ray and I both manage some relaxation, there are many things to be done. But we love it all. The work never bothers us.

The night had blotted the further Islands of Tuckernuck and Muskeget. Through the picture window the finger-like harbor gleamed in the darkness. A minor fog touched the low spots of the land gently. "We are content here," said Mrs. Ray and the comment was readily understandable.

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PETTICOAT ROW

## Daughter Follows In Footsteps Of Famous Father, Tony Sarg

By Alice B. Howard

Mary Sarg

Have you ever wondered why original Tony Sarg designs continue to appear — when the Master died in 1942? The answer lies in a slim, alert-faced young woman with golden red hair and a pleasant twinkle in her eyes — Mrs. Everett Miller, the former Mary Sarg.

"My father never could find anything unless it was in a pile," she smiled. "After his death, I found thousands of designs which had never been used. And of course he willed me the legal right to use his name."

She left the office briefly to welcome a new tenant to the attractive apartment above the shop on Broad Street. Upon her return she picked up the conversation, "Often when Tony was working under terrific pressure and unable to finish a promised order I would do it for him. Of course, I could tell the difference between his work and mine — but the public never could."

A Nantucket Summer resident for the past 30 years, Mary Sarg Miller appreciates the Island from a dual attitude. She is not quite a native — although she would have liked to have been — and definitely not "coof", the Nantucketer's word for the off-Islander. She has executed portraits of many Nantucket children, the sons and daughters of her former playmates.

Portraiture is no longer possible for Mrs. Miller for she is too busy with the shops — one in Nantucket, the other in New Hope, Pa. — which she and her husband manage together. In addition she continues to produce children's books in typical Sarg vein — one of her major interests — and to manage the home and Karen her daughter, who will be nine in September.

At the moment she is creating a different kind of book for adults — particular details are still a secret — which she hopes will be as successful as the other Sarg books designed for children.

### Work Resembles Dad's

There is an interesting story behind her ability to produce work so closely resembling her father's. Born in London while Mr. and Mrs. Sarg were making their home there, the three-year old daughter was carefully guided by her father who had a fixed idea about his daughter's future. If Mr. Sarg could manage it she was to be a commercial artist like himself.

When the little girl first came to New York with her parents at the age of four, she was already beginning to shape to her father's ambition. Every Sunday after the Sarg's had established their New Jersey home, she and her father would spend the day working together in the West Ninth Street studio with the big North windows. Mrs. Miller said the teaching was guided by her father's determination rather than by methodical instruction.

During her private schooling in Orange, New Jersey, and her years at Pine Manor Junior College in Wellesley, she continued working under and with her father, growing more proficient in his methods and approach to art. But, finally, when she was 18 she revolted. Her interests, she told Tony Sarg firmly, lay in fine arts. Finally, after considerable argument, she was permitted to study French commercial art and poster design at the Fontainebleau Beaux Arts School, just outside of Paris.

Once arrived there, she took matters into her own hands — and enrolled in the fine arts course, specializing in portraiture. She continued to frustrate her father's hopes for her when she stayed on in Paris for an extra three months of private study in the city.

She returned to New York just before Christmas of that year with a portfolio of portraits. Uneasily, she watched her father's face as he studied the paintings revealed by the custom's officers while he checked her luggage. "I never had told Tony what I had done," Mrs. Miller said, "the proof was there — and he was horri-

fied." "However," she went on, "When I explained that I had to develop my own artistic individuality before I could work contentedly with him he understood."

### Attended Art Schools

During the next two or three years she studied at New York art schools, among them the Art Students League, Pheonix Art Institute, and the School of Applied Design for Women. She followed that with a Summer spent on Martha's Vineyard, studying with the late Jonas Lie.

"It broke my heart not to be on Nantucket," she smiled, "but I had a chance to study landscape, portraits, composition, and still life — and finally I settled on child portraits as my real specialty — although I continued to help my father when I could."

In 1936 she met Everett Miller, a young mechanical engineer, originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, but at the time with his father's publishing concern, the Miller Music Publishing Company.

After their marriage, she was assisted by Mr. Miller in her portraits of young children. In order to prepare herself for sittings with year-old children, she found it necessary to take at least 25 photographed poses. These Mr. Miller did, for photography was one of his hobbies. After a thorough study of the child subject, Mrs. Miller would arrange sittings and the work progressed to completion.

Two years later she and Mr. Miller rented the Chopping Bowl on Union Street in Nantucket, now belonging to Elmer Green, and opened a class in portrait painting. "That was a busy Summer," Mrs. Miller confessed. "I went to the beach five times, attended five cocktail parties and lost five pounds."

The next Winter, upon the advice of Tony Sarg, they settled permanently into an attractive house in New Hope, Pa. and opened a second "Tony Sarg Shop." Again, Mrs. Miller openly express-

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ed her appreciation of Nantucket when she said, "New Hope has one street almost identical to one in 'Sconset. That made it seem right to be there."

#### Had Unique Experience

Mrs. Miller, in her combined career of artist and homemaker, has had one experience which she believes is unique with her. She has spent the night in R.H.Macy's toy department.

Tony Sarg, originator of Macy's Fifth Avenue Christmas parades of balloon toys and animals, was commissioned one season to decorate the walls on the fifth floor which houses the elaborate collection of holiday toys. Mr. Sarg enlisted Mrs. Miller's help.

Finally at the end of almost the last day of work with murals still to be finished, Mary Sarg decided that by working on through the quiet night hours she might be able to almost complete the vast undertaking. Only the night watchman passing on his rounds disturbed her as she braced herself on a scaffold and painted. She paused occasionally for coffee and doughnuts and to glance around with amusement at the shrouded displays. Street rumblings reached her only faintly.

Gradually day lightened the windows. The shadows withdrew and the watchman made his final round. Still balanced on a scaffold but by now directly over one set of elevator doors, Mary Sarg continued her brush work. When suddenly, the quiet was torn by the shrill 9:30 opening bell. At the same time, the elevator slid up to the fifth floor and flung a vast crowd of noisy shoppers onto the floor just beneath Mrs. Miller's feet.

Weary after her peaceful, hard-working night, she almost toppled into the crowd from amazement at the rush and racket. As she looks back upon the experience she remarks that she hopes never again to face such a disrupting, black horde as greeted her that morning.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Miller are ambitious for Nantucket's handicrafts. Mrs. Miller said that they had tried to convince local artisans a waiting market existed for Island crafts yet they have met with continual opposition from those who would profit most. "The Island is full of natural products which could be utilized in building up a whole line of important products," Mrs. Miller commented, "yet lack of interest in even trying to produce our ideas frustrates us continually."

"Nantucket is home to us," she stood in the doorway looking out beyond the Skipper to the harbor. "Mr. Miller loves it almost as much as I do. Times have changed, of course, but we feel Nantucket progresses — and will grow even faster into a resort center if everyone of us who works on the Island will remember that transients are as important to us as permanent Summer residents. We must accept them patiently — and they will come again and send others to us. Nantucket should welcome everyone."

# Petticoat Row

Cora Stevens

Editors Note: The Town Crier with this issue begins a new weekly feature—"Petticoat Row"—devoted to Island women who have been or are active in Nantucket's business, social or political sphere. This newspaper invites nominations for each week's columns from its readers. Many Nantucket women have taken active leadership in the town's business, social and political affairs.

One of these is Miss Cora Stevens who for the last 24 years has owned and operated a gift and book store on Center street—called "Petticoat Row" because at one time its shopkeepers were mostly women.

Well known for her business activity and acumen, Miss Stevens is equally respected and loved as a person by her fellow citizens.

She has been quoted as saying as she looked out of the window of her store on school children and adults who were passing by: "There goes my family—all the family I have now—walking up and down the street."

That remark explains much of her unflagging interest in her home town and its people. Her interest in them—often unnoticed because of a self-effacing quality, has reached out in many, quiet ways.

George, Arthur and Cora, children of Mr. and Mrs. William Stevens, were born and brought up in a house on Lower Pine street. The home was a happy one, for Mrs. Stevens was a contented wife and mother, while Mr. Stevens, musician and old-time caller at dances, was genial and gay.

A farmer, Mr. Stevens enjoyed having his hazel-eyed daughter assist him with his chores around the place and care for the animals. An outdoor child, she climbed and raced and jumped with the best of them, preferring the heartier sports of the boys to play with girls. Wintertimes when the snow covered the streets, Cora was the first to drag her sled up Mill Hill and ride down the icy slope and the last to leave when the snow was almost gone. When Lily Pond froze, she was out circling with the other skaters, chatter and skates flashing together.

One of her keenest delights was to spend the weekend with Uncle Charlie Pitman in 'Sconset. Here again it was the outdoor farm life which attracted her as well as the memories of her grandfather, Captain James Pitman, one of the old-time whaling masters. Riding the hayrack to the mow, sliding down the piles of fresh hay in the barn and spending a long, happy evening with her aunt before climbing the stairs to bed—these appealed to her.

From her New England ancestors, she inherited a dry humor and a practical shrewdness which has not failed her in her business life. Her cleverness and ability were evident back in her school days. One of those who pays tribute to those qualities is Miss Annie Ring of North Liberty, one of her grade teachers.

"Cora was a good student. She was smart and never mischievous—like some of the others."

A schoolmate of Miss Stevens, Mrs. Adelbert Baker, describes her as an intelligent pupil, who, however, never seemed to study.

"She'd come home from school and drop her books down," said Mrs. Baker who graduated in 1906 with Miss Stevens. "At breakfast, she'd ask her mother where they were. She hadn't opened a book—but the rest of us really worked. But Cora, well, she never seemed to study. She was smart enough so the teacher never guessed. And that is some smart!"

Outside of school, Cora was very active, participating in all the games which appealed in those days to the younger set. One of these, Miss Stevens recalled was the "Hiding Candy Frolic." Under rules of this game, the girls by a pre-arranged signal would band together and hide in someone's house. If the girls were found before curfew—they would have to treat the boys. If not, the boys would pay.

In the days of Miss Stevens' grandmother, such games during long Winter afternoons and evenings ended in candy-pulling and the making of popcorn balls. But Miss Stevens' generation contented themselves with ice cream and cookies or a homemade cake.

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Most young people after graduation like to try their abilities away from home and Miss Stevens was no exception. On graduating from school here in 1906, she attended Bryant and Stratton Business School in Boston while living with an aunt in Brockton. On completing the course a year later, she returned to Nantucket.

Her first position was in the Dry Goods Store of Edward A. Lawrence at the corner of Orange and Main street. Her business acumen grew keener under the eye of William Hall Jr., manager of the C. F. Wing Store, then located on the south side of Main street. She gained additional experience in Congdon's Pharmacy as clerk and bookkeeper before deciding to venture into business herself. In 1915, she opened her own shop.

Her business now carries an assortment of gifts, stationery cards, books as well as the candy sideline. In 1935, she added an annex for sports goods and children's gifts and toys.

Miss Stevens is much more than a business owner on Nantucket. Her kindly understanding of people has won her a host of friends and her contributions to good causes are numerous.

One of her greatest interests is the First Congregational Church and to coin an old expression, she is considered one of its "pillars." For the last 20 years, she has been the church's treasurer.

At one time, she was very active as a member of the Island Rebekah Lodge, which she served as Noble Grand. Now she rarely attends its meetings.

"I find now that I like to spend my evenings at home more than in the past," she said. "Perhaps I am getting a little old."

The lively twinkle in her eyes and her quick, energetic way of getting about, however, belies that. The verve and engaging enthusiasm which made her so popular with the young people are still apparent in her brisk and bubbling personality. Age has nothing to do with a spirit who can create a steady affection in the hearts of young and old alike.

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## Petticoat-

(Continued from Page 1)

concealing the apartment she made from the second house, serves as a pleasing frame for goblets, vases and other old pieces of blue glass.

Her greatest surprise came, however, in the present dining-room, originally the kitchen of the Bunkers. A small fireplace, built against the big chimney a good many years before, suddenly began to crumble. Bits of bricks and dust and plaster tumbled to the hearth. In making the repairs, workmen uncovered an immense fireplace right behind the smaller one.

This was a noteworthy find although Miss Stovell said she had heard from some of the older generation that such a fireplace had stood there in the beginning. It was with delight that she found the old oven used for baking bread, the black iron kettle with its crane and warming seat within the original chimney. When she stood upright in the chimney-place glimpses of blue sky and clouds were visible. With the last trace of the smaller fireplace removed, the chimney was found to be in such good state of preservation that practically no work was necessary.

Still planning on how to give the old kitchen new life, she removed an old-fashioned china closet at the southeast end, close to where a back door opened into the garden at the rear. The old door now opens into a side-wall closet and a window is set in where the back door was before.

Stimulated by these changes, Miss Stovell went to work on a plaster wall, the continuation from the fireplace. Beneath the plaster she found wide old boards measuring 22 and a half inches in width. This pleased her tremendously although she had previously measured boards in the attic and cellar which were a full 24 inches.

### House-Kept Shipwreck Record

One of the amusing features in the attic discovered by careful examination of the beams still retaining their tree bark was a contemporary record of shipwrecks occurring around the Island and the dates. Perhaps a child, perhaps one of the elders in the family, kept the bulletin board, no longer visible beneath its coat of paint.

the old farm house into a popular guest house where comfort and cleanliness and hospitality were prerequisites. It became of course her special function to see that an effortless efficiency ran through the house on busy Summer days.

House guests at the Homestead did not have to seek an outside breakfast place for she served them in her own dining-room. During the war years she would seat as many as 50 each morning. As nearby Inns closed at the end of each Summer, the Homestead was open for dinner for those who lingered to watch the Fall

The family of George Bunker, of French Huguenot extraction, came to the Island about 1649. The name, according to the "History of Nantucket" by Alexander Starbuck was a contraction of "Bon Coeur," meaning good heart. Young George, stepson of Richard Swain, married Deborah Coffin, October 10, 1695 and 14 years later when they moved into their new home on Fair street their family of three sons, Daniel, John and Caleb, was complete.

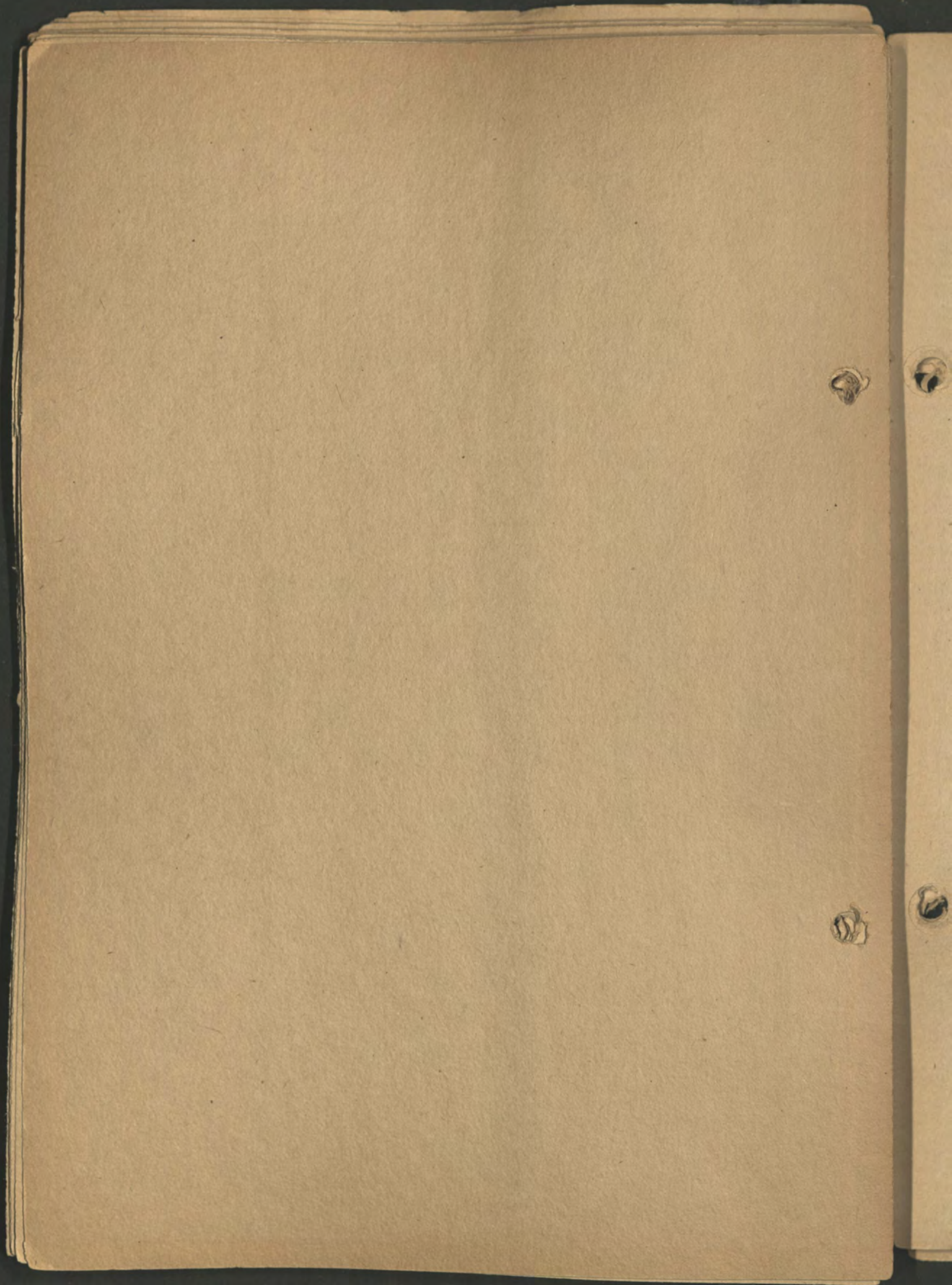
The father of the three boys must have been an Islander of position and some substance for he represented Nantucket in the General Court at Boston 19 times during the years between 1719 and 1743, although not successively. His youngest brother, Benjamin Bunker, was one of Nantucket's silversmiths and so listed in Everett U. Crosby's "Books and Baskets, Signs and Silver of Old Time Nantucket."

Benjamin Bunker spent a good deal of time in the old house and Miss Stovell likes to imagine he might have used the big fireplace for his work once in a while.

The Woodbox is now Miss Stovell's principal hobby but she used to have many others. One of these was climbing Whiteface Mountain in the Adirondacks as well as Marcy and McIntyre, spending hot Summer days along the trails of Indian Pass which connect the latter two peaks. Championship golf and long cool swims in Lake Placid's Mirror Lake were two of her other interests.

The Woodbox is fortunate to have found so understanding an owner as Miss Stovell. A less perceptive individual might so easily have ruined the old house by adding incongruous, modern details. Filled with old furniture, picked up in her travels, the house which stood empty

May 7, 1948



## PETTICOAT ROW

By Alice B. Howard

Petticoat Row rocked gently in the low chair relaxing with Mrs. Charles M. Sutherland, one of New York's well-known gem engravers, Island Summer resident.

Incising designs on precious or semi-precious stones is an ancient and honorable art, Mrs. Sutherland said, but her own interest as a glyptographer, is in modern portraits. She has in the last 20 years made approximately 60 such likenesses, all in intaglio — that is — carved deeply into the stone. "I particularly enjoy doing the heads of children and the moonstone is my favorite of all the stones," she declared. She also works emeralds, sapphires and sardonyx.

"I have brought an unfinished engagement ring with me to complete this Summer," she added. "It will have the young man's head carved on a fine quality smoky topaz."

Chatting efficiently through several common pins held in her mouth, Mrs. Sutherland explained that many of the 60 portraits cut on gems have been made into bracelets or rings. One such bracelet held four moonstones bearing individual likenesses of the sons in the family.

Her first chance to create these jewels came directly after her graduation from Skidmore College in 1921 where her majoring interests were book illustrating and sculpture for which, she said, she had real feeling. Apprenticed to Ottavio Negri whose New York Art Jewelry Studio was well-known for the same type, she was asked to work on portraits of ten of the 12 children of John Raskob, of Wilmington, Del. After sketching the youngsters, she returned to New York to settle down to molding wax models from her drawings. These, Mrs. Sutherland described as four times the final size of the intaglio. She then reduced them by squaring off the portraits on ruled paper. The last step involved what she called "drawing down" until details of the miniature portrait and its composition were perfect and identical to what was to appear on the gem.

The actual work of engraving follows these preliminary steps. The tools, fashioned by Mrs. Sutherland, represent a whole series of size graduations for each line requires a different length, or depth, or curve. An electric lathe holds a style, a stubby, sharp-pointed piece of graphite in the proper position as well as single tools. She holds the already shaped and polished gem up to each tool, then turns on the switch to begin the delicate, painstaking job of engraving.

## Spends 100 Hours On Gem

She finds it difficult to measure the length of time required for one portrait for the work is subject to interruption. Tools must be changed frequently and careful adjustments made in the mechanical end of creating. Mrs. Sutherland spends an approximate 100 hours over one gem, dividing the work over a period of time which may vary from five weeks to a year.

After four and a half years with Mr. Negri, she went to Rome hoping to study with the former partner of her New York master — only to find he had retired to private life after completing a moonstone portrait of Queen Wilhelmina of Holland.

It was while studying in Rome with a Russian sculptor that she met Charles Mosely Sutherland, now a teacher of art at the Buckley School in New York, at that time also an art student. The gay attractive young artist and the tall, thin student discovered at once a common background. Both derived from Minneapolis, Minn. and numbered mutual friends in their childhood backgrounds although they had never met until the eventful day in Rome.

"We used to slide down all the same cellar doors," Mrs. Sutherland chuckled, "yet never once spoke or met." She still enjoys the "happenstance" which culminated in their marriage in the tiny village of Lasaucetat in Auvergne, France.

Together, during the next year and a half, the young couple attended a theatrical school directed by Rene Feurst of the Odeon, former pupil of the late Max Rein-

hardt. Then a little later while Mrs. Sutherland cared for their infant son, Peter, Mr. Sutherland produced pageants at a Summer camp located on Lac d'Annecy near Saint-Cloud.

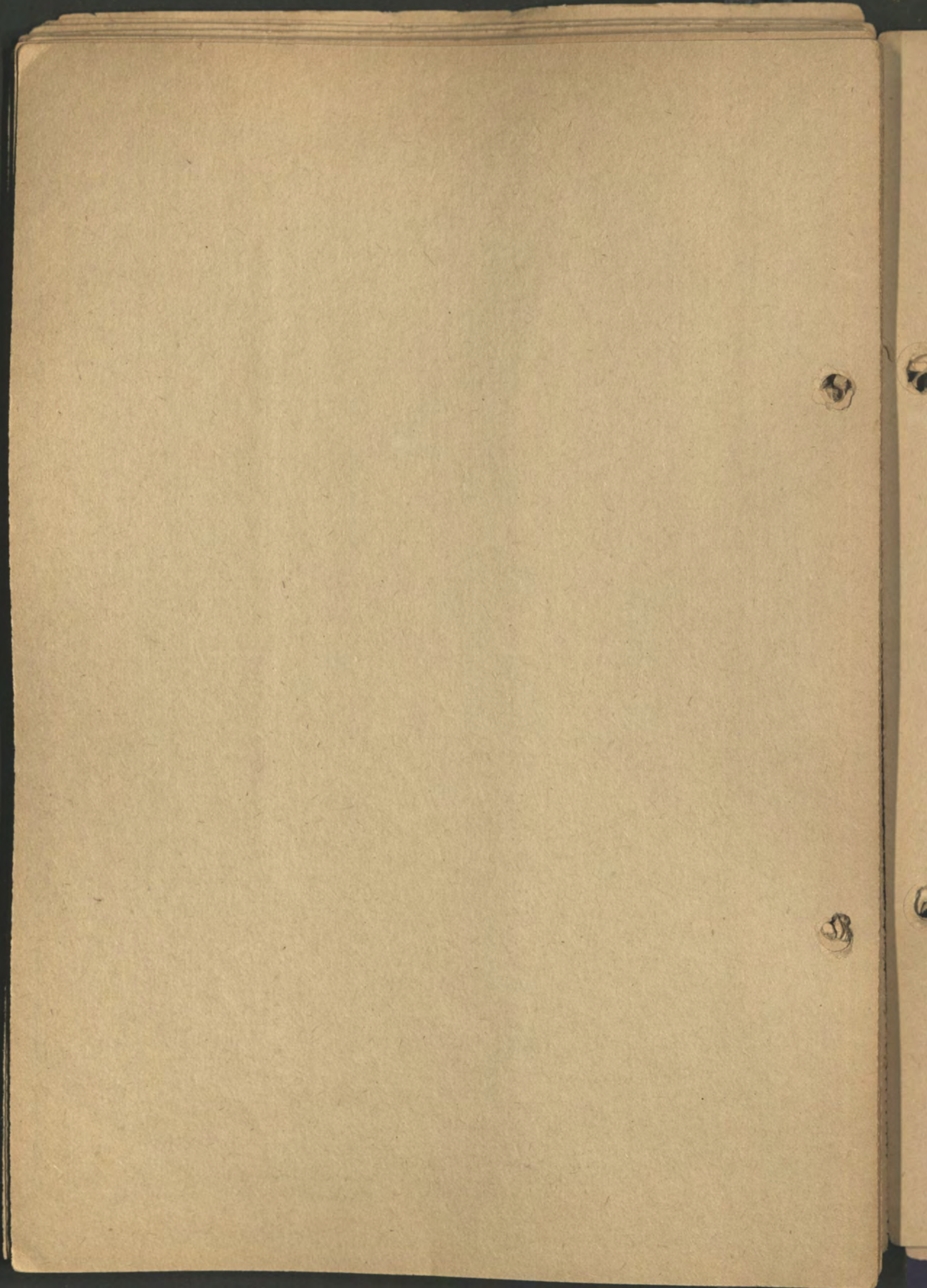
Following their return to New York Mrs. Sutherland immediately reestablished her art contacts, receiving many commissions for gem portraits. Her daughter, Jan, Skidmore College student, scene painter and actress in the Straight Wharf Theater group, was born in New York. From then on Mrs. Sutherland's hands were full with the manifold duties of mother, artist and home manager.

## Wardrobe Mistress

The Sutherland's recent advent to the Island was the result of a meeting between Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson, co-director of the theater group, and Ruth Gillmore, New York actress, sister of Margolo Gillmore now playing in London, and the mother of Micheal Sonino, present juvenile lead. Miss Gillmore suggested Mrs. Sutherland as wardrobe mistress for the group and Mr. Sutherland as stage director.

A friendly, sincere person with the ideals of a perfectionist, Mrs. Sutherland, in spite of her busy days at the theater, is thoroughly enjoying her first Nantucket Summer. "Of course, much of my time," she smiled, "is spent right here between the sewing machine and the ironing board. But once the openings are over — and all costumes complete — I will have time to see more of the beaches and really enjoy a few weeks in this lovely place."

July 23, 1948



## Petticoat Row

### Nantucket Artist Drops Permanent Anchor At One-Time 'Fish-House'

Petticoat Row takes pleasure in presenting this week Miss Ruth Haviland Sutton, lithographer, portraitist in both oils and pastels, designer of small cards of local scenes on the Island, artist for the Town Crier masthead and a permanent resident of Nantucket since 1936.

In a small, frame studio, called The Scallop, a once-upon-a-time "fish-house," Miss Sutton works steadily on her oils and drawings. A broad, roofed porch, partially concealed from the street by fence and bushes, looks directly upon the water and across to Monomoy. Here on days too warm for anything but pure enjoyment, Miss Sutton gathers with her friends.

Since her first Summer on the Island in 1924 when she arrived with her mother, Mrs. George H. Sutton, to study landscaping under Frank Swift Chase, artist and frequent Summer resident, she has loved the quiet of the South Beach area.

"I like it too well to ever change," she said. "We are a congenial group, mostly artists—and the ocean is our back door."

Her first season, she and her mother spent with Mr. and Mrs. Walton H. Adams on Fair street. Their meeting is another of those casual encounters which endears the Island to strangers. Just off the boat, Miss Sutton and her mother were wandering along Main street discussing a probable room when impulsively they dropped into the post office, then situated on the corner of Union and Main streets.

A kindly-faced man, framed in the general delivery window, answered their question about rooms with a pronounced twinkle in his eye. "My wife lets rooms. Go along up to 17 Fair street, why don't you?" And in the Adams' pleasant home they spent a contented Summer.

#### First Island Painting

It was during that Summer she received her initial commission from the Nantucket Treasure Shop, run by Mrs. J. H. Bartlett, Jr. It came by way of a small black and white drawing of Stone Alley. Mrs. Bartlett liked the drawing so much she asked Miss Sutton to develop a line of "pencil prints," small greeting cards, in black

and white, of Nantucket scenes. The cards found a ready sale in Mrs. Bartlett's shop which dealt chiefly in imports from Italy and other European countries. Since those early days, she has added other communities to her "pencil prints": Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, Marblehead, Salem, Boston, New York, Williamsburg and Florida scenes. In addition, she produces delicately drawn postcards of local scenes, sketched in pencil.

Miss Sutton has found Nantucket scenes and houses lend themselves readily to effective lithographys. Several of these prints have been bought and are now hanging in homes in other countries. One of these, a study of Orange Street after a fall of snow, has gone to Sweden while another of the same street from a slightly different approach will be hung in an international French exhibit to be held in Paris this coming Winter.

An unusually beautiful lithograph with the massed, irregular rise and fall of the town silhouetted in the background, the salt marshes south of Con-sue street in the foreground, has been invited to an exhibit at the art museum of Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Miss Sutton has always enjoyed this particular art medium. She studied it under George C. Miller, foremost United States lithographer. It was while working with Mr. Miller that an article entitled "George Miller, Godfather of Lithography" appeared in a June issue of American Artist. Illustrated with step-by-step photographs of the process, the final pictures show one of Miss Sutton's Nantucket studies of harbor, small boats and outlined town being pulled from the stone.

In discussing lithographs as opposed to etchings, Miss Sutton characterized the former as "a sincere medium," the reason being that in removing the crayon drawing from the stone there is no opportunity for "shading" or smearing of the print as in an etching. The print comes from the stone clear, distinct and firmly limned.

#### Makes Realistic Studies

Her many portraits, both oil and pastels, are realistic studies of her subjects, except when the subjects themselves have requested certain moods or other details be emphasized.

While Miss Sutton was working on a pastel of Jane Sylvia, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Antone Sylvia, one day, Mrs. Albert Manning happened one day to come into the studio. Pleased with the effectiveness of the artist at work on the portrait of the young girl, Mrs. Manning photographed the two. She submitted the resulting picture in a local picture contest where it achieved a first prize. Resubmitted in a national contest, in 1940, it won again, although not a first in the final contest.

Of the Island and her home here, Miss Sutton says that from the first it seemed "just right." Her every return has strengthened that feeling until she finally decided to drop a permanent anchor on South Beach. "Perhaps," she added, "it is not only because I am New England on both sides but because a member of the family once told me that Lucretia Mott was a connection of ours. I would like to find that was true. Then perhaps I would never be a complete 'stranger' again."

Born in Springfield, Mass., her father, George Haviland Sutton, was a birthright Quaker from Bedford, N. Y., while her mother, N. Grace Abbe, descended from original settlers in Connecticut. Miss Sutton graduated from the public schools of Springfield and from the Hollywood School for Girls, a boarding school in California.

Her first decision to study art professionally came while still in high school although throughout her childhood she had shown a marked ability with pencil and crayons. Even in her very young days her main interests had been in portraits, houses and drawings, with an early well-balanced enthusiasm for both color and black and white.

Formal art instruction took place first at the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Arts in Philadelphia during 1925-1926. This was followed by further study at the Grand Central School of Art in New York City.

June 4, 1948

#### Art Influences Cited

Miss Sutton mentions the following artists as the men who have developed her talent and influenced her progress more than any others: Henry B. Snell, landscapes and portraits, at Boothbay Harbor in Maine in 1927; Mahonri Young, sculptor, at the Art Students League in New York City; Jerry Farnsworth, portraitist, in Florida in 1935, and Mr. Miller, lithographer.

Her pictures have been hung in many of the well-known, off-Island galleries, notably at the National Academy of Design.

National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, in the Congressional Library in Washington, D. C., and the Aston Collection in Springfield as well as in the city libraries of New York, Boston and Springfield and the University Library at Columbia.

One of her achievements of which she is justly proud is the eight by 11 foot decoration, an oil study of the universe seen from the moon's orbit, hanging permanently in the Hall of Astronomy in the Museum of Natural History in Springfield and a smaller one in the Hall of Planets. In 1933 she was one of 500 women artists chosen by the then recently formed Civil Works Administration — this preceded the later W.P.A. — to do special work for public buildings. The two decorations and two additional smaller panels were designed and completed during a three month period.

Another long-term project which kept her busy the entire Winter of 1945-1946 was a detailed, historical map of Nantucket. Designed and drawn by Miss Sutton, it was the result of extensive research, painstakingly done, in order that details might be absolutely accurate. The chronology and other local data have been carried through to 1945. It was the first time she had worked with a "divided line," a two-way inked line which prohibits one color, during the process of printing, from merging with a second color.

At the Kenneth Taylor Galleries on Straight Wharf, Miss Sutton had a one-man show, two years ago of Winter landscapes in oils and last season a one-man show on her paintings of Guatemala. A firm believer in Nantucket's annual sidewalk show, held during the first three days of the third week of August, she always shows several local drawings and paintings. The show originated in 1929 under the directorship of the late Miss Maud Stum and since her death has been continued by Miss Emily Hoffmeier.

Like most professionals, Miss Sutton has her own well developed art philosophy. In stating it briefly she said, "Art manifests itself in many varying degrees of ability. It should have a practical expression as well as give pleasure to others and creative satisfaction to the artist."

This certainly appears the basis of Miss Sutton's self-expression for she applies with skill and understanding many phases of her own ability. Thus she adds not only to her own fulfillment but to the pleasure of others.

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## Petticoat Row

Mrs. William T. Swain, known to her many friends as Daisy, has an enviable reputation as a bowler of amateur standing. Her sporting activities, however, have not been limited to skillful placing of ten pin balls down an alley. She was equally talented on both roller and ice skates, an excellent ball-room dancer for which she received prizes, an enthusiastic bicyclist, swimmer and diver and a competent hand with a sailing boat.

Her introduction to the Island of Nantucket occurred many years ago when she came here as the bride of the late Rep. William T. Swain, son of Captain and Mrs. William T. Swain. The meeting of the former Miss Alice Daisy Cook of Fairhaven and her husband-to-be occurred on the Old Mill Pond ice skating rink at New Bedford. Mr. Swain at that time was studying at the New Bedford Business College. They were married three months after their first greetings.

Mrs. Swain joined her husband who had preceded her to the Island a few months later. They lived for a few years in a house on Main street, the property of Miss Sara Phillips.

With the opening of the new clubhouse of the Nantucket Athletic Club on South Beach street, now the Yacht Club, the young couple began a mutual interest in games which persists in Mrs. Swain to the present time.

Here on the new alleys, Mr. Swain taught his wife the bowling technique she still uses so effectively. My husband was very enthusiastic about the game," Mrs. Swain said, "But after a very few lessons I could beat him every time."

Having outclassed her teacher, Mrs. Swain progressed during the three years that she and her husband managed the alleys until she finally achieved the remarkable score of 295 — the highest ten pin score to be rolled by any woman in the state. A perfect game is 300. Mrs. Swain rolled 11 strikes in each string.

Even today swinging a "mean" ball, she is considered to become almost the queen of the Manchester Alleys and the pride of the team she has captained. This Winter she became a regular member, along with Mrs. Gerda Metcalfe, on a men's team which plays every Tuesday night.

During the 1947 season she captained the "Pixies" and received

ed with her five players the trophy awarded by the Nantucket Bowling Association. A slender golden figure of a bowler, holding the ball ready for a swing, tops a black base with an engraved plate which reads "Women Champions. Pixies. Daisy Swain, Captain." Other members of the triumphant team were Mrs. Mary Wilson, Mrs. Marian Renimo, Mrs. Frances Visco, Mrs. Martha McLaughlin and Mrs. Jennie MacDonald.

Again captain of her own team for the 1948 season, Mrs. Swain said it was too early to know exactly how the games would run although at the moment her team, "The Boat Irene," was seven points ahead of the runner-up. Mrs. Renimo and Mrs. Wilson are again members of this year's team as well as Mrs. Mary E. Nelson, Mrs. Gwendolyn Ray and Mrs. Maxine Howes.

In addition to the team trophy last year, Mrs. Swain received five personal awards in the form of small gold shields, from the Bowling Association for high single string, high three strings, most strikes, most spares and high average of 98 for 60 strings.

While the balls bounced merrily down the alleys at the Athletic Club, roller skaters were whirling around the floor of another room, arm-in-arm, singly and in groups of three. On skating nights from the time the rink opened until the last couple had left, Mrs. Swain, skates on her trim feet, waltzed, pirouetted and made figure eights.

She was equally happy on ice skates. Many a crisp night when No-bottom Pond was smooth and solid, she might be found cutting figures on the ice. She and other skaters frolicking there danced and skimmed until the night air grew sharp enough to send them all searching for a warm fire and hot coffee.

At J. B. Chace Hall her nimble gracefulness on the dance floor, especially in the new one-step with Lester Day as a partner, won her a silver-handled umbrella. Another night, off-Island judges awarded her a rocking chair for the perfection of her waltz.

Her ability to enjoy active games and dancing made her an excellent partner in her husband's bicycle shop, formerly situated where C. F. Wing's is now, and called The Barnes White Flyer. With a record of bicycling of one mile in three minutes, she held a position among bicyclists which not many of her husband's customers could emulate. During these years, Nantucket grew accustomed to the Swains riding contentedly along the streets and roads on a tandem bike.

Daisy Swain

Another of her pastimes were the plays dramatized by the Unity Club in the old Athenaeum Hall. In "The Colorado Heiress" she held the star role as well as "The Old Maid's Convention." Between the acts, Mr. Swain occasionally played clarinet solos.

But life was not all play for Mrs. Swain. Following the death of her husband's parents, she and Mr. Swain moved out to the farm on the Madaket road. The property was bought a few years ago by Charles Kimball.

Settled comfortably there, she decided to help her husband make the farm pay. Essentially practical minded, she undertook to raise chickens but not without first taking a home course in poultry-raising. Setting up her own incubator she went to work with her usual energy and determination. Shortly she had 500 chickens and 400 laying hens.

As she tells the story of those days she laughs at herself for the time and motherly care she devoted to the young chickens. "Really I spoiled them. I waited on them, beak and claw. I dug worms and laid them down in front of them. I even scratched for them," she went on. "I knew when they were comfortable and when they were bothered. But you know, that care paid off. I lost very, very few and we ended up good friends."

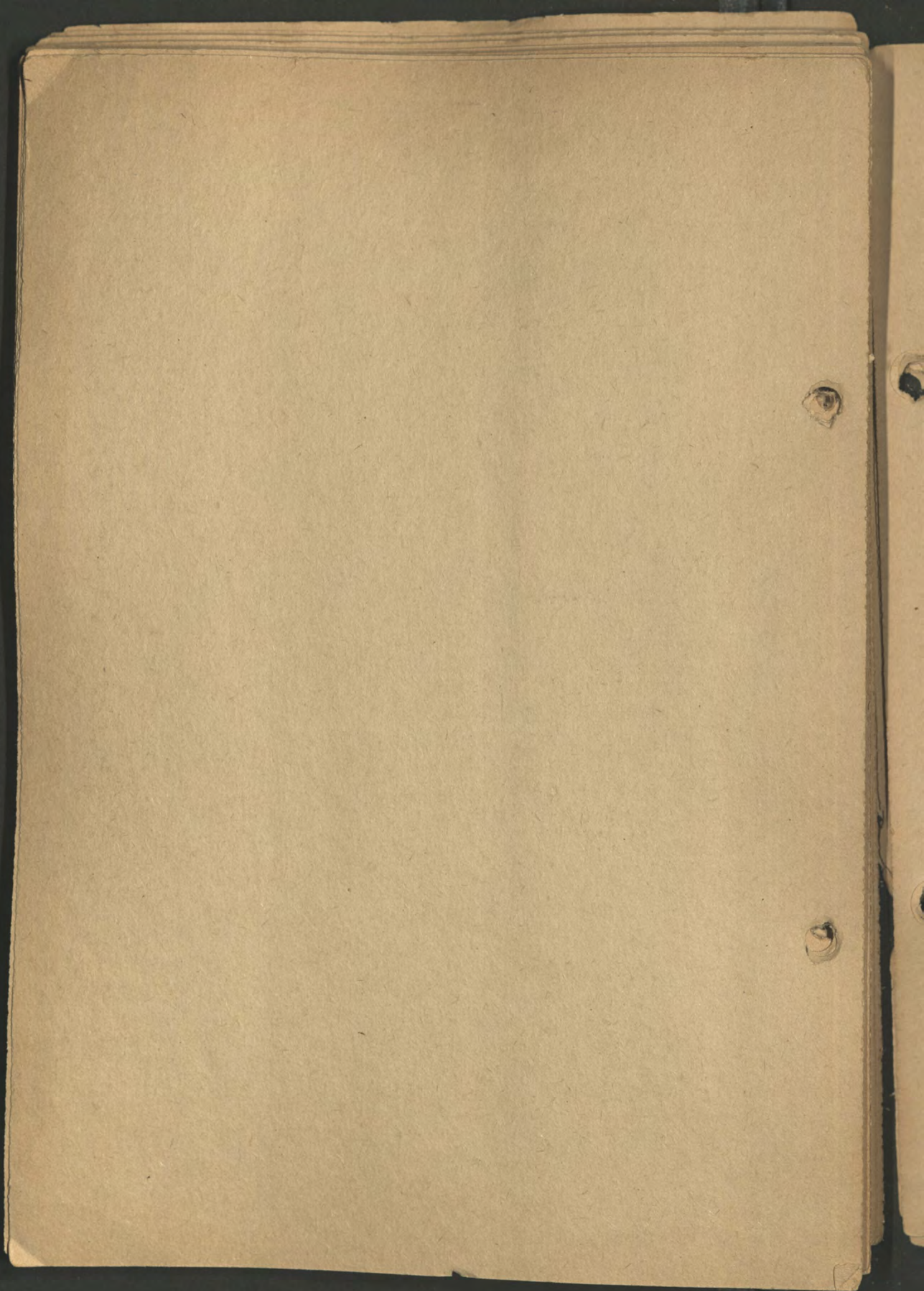
In 1931 her husband first represented Nantucket at the State House in Boston, a position which he held until his death in 1937. Mrs. Swain spent considerable time off-Island during those years. She is still proud of the personal popularity of her husband. "The last year he ran," said Mrs. Swain, "he received the highest single vote given to any man up to that time — 1485 votes out of a possible 1500."

Mrs. Swain is an active member of many of the Island organizations. She belongs to the Island Rebekah Lodge, the Sherburne Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, the Grange, The Union Circle and the Hustlers, the latter two organizations of the First Congregational church; the Civic League and the Nantucket Historical Association.

With her spirited energy, her delight in activity of any kind and her early interest in outdoor fads such as roller skating and bicycling, now everyday necessities for all young people, the old song "Daisy" might have been written for her.

"Daisy, Daisy, give me your promise true,

March 5, 1948



# Petticoat Row

Edith Sylvia

No matter how brief her stay in Petticoat Row, Miss Edith Sylvia belongs there, for about 40 years ago she ran a small store two doors below Miss Cora Stevens' present shop. Her stock-in-trade was candy and inexpensive novelties which appealed strongly to an earlier generation of children and young people.

As a private citizen also she had a right to be included in the Row. From 1928 to 1938 during the Rev. Fred Bennett's ministry to the First Congregational Church, Miss Sylvia was superintendent of the Sunday School. She enjoyed her ten years as superintendent, for those who served as teachers and officers were, as she says, "good workers" and gave her ready support. Of her own qualifications for the position she speaks modestly. "I couldn't sing, I couldn't recite, I couldn't teach," she said, "but somehow my suggestions met with such willingness that I had no trouble building attendance. The school grew to a membership of 100 during these years."

One element contributing to the growth of the Sunday School, she said, was the leadership of Alvin E. Paddock, former instructor in the Coffin School, who conducted an adult class. Others who served as officers and teachers were Miss Edith Bartlett, secretary; Mrs. Viola Bartlett, treasurer, Miss Gladys Ray and Mrs. Adelbert Baker, teachers. To this day, she is proud of the men and women who helped her make the school a success.

Miss Sylvia's connection with and interest in the First Congregational Church extends back into her girlhood. Among her treasures is a group photograph, taken in the church parlors, of a play, "The District School," and produced under the direction of Miss Emma Cook and Miss Bertha Lawrence. Some of those in the cast were Mrs. F. W. Fanning, wife of the minister, Miss Sara Bunker Winslow, Miss Charlotte Barrett, Miss Sylvia at about the age of 14, Harry B. Turner, Albert G. Brock, Herbert Worth, Edward G. Thomas and Lester Hull.

## Lives With Aunt

Miss Sylvia who lives on Center street with her aunt, Mrs. Calvert Handy, now 92, was born in a house on the corner of Orange and York streets owned by her father, Antone Sylvia. As a young man of 17, Mr. Sylvia left the island of Pico in the Azores to make his way in America. A few years later he reached Nantucket (exactly how or why his daughter did not know and met and married Elizabeth Ray of Squam.

A cooper by trade, he sailed on ten whaling voyages, constructing aboard the ships the five-foot oil casks, held in readiness for the sperm oil. These huge barrels, made of soft wood, with wooden or iron hoops to hold the upright staves together, were caulked with flag, a wide-bladed, thick grass, forced between the staves to make the casks oil-tight.

Home life was often difficult in the whaling days with the man of the family gone for months and Mrs. Sylvia finally persuaded her husband to stay at home with her and their young daughter. So, with the ingenuity of Island men, he opened a grocery store in the front room of his house on Orange street. For long years he kept his store, sometimes assisted by his wife or daughter.

Miss Sylvia entered the Coffin School at the age of nine. It was still a private institution, functioning under the old grant given to Admiral Isaac Coffin in 1827 by the General Court of Massachusetts. She graduated in 1898 with 17 other students, the last class to leave the old school before it was closed.

E. B. Fox was the principal. The teachers who influenced her the most during her schooling were Miss Guillelma Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, and Miss Gertrude King. The teachers were noted for their strict discipline, so much so that public school children who became a behavior problem were recommended to the Coffin School with the hope that their attitudes would mature. Each parent was charged a tuition fee of two dollars a term and the students had to buy their school books.

## Impressed by Miss Folger

Miss Folger particularly impressed Miss Sylvia. The latter recalled that Miss Folger, dressed in tailored-shirt-waists and skirts with a stock about her neck, held neatly in place with a tie. In spite of the teacher's mannish appearance and her often harsh words, she was kind and thoughtful. When a student made an effort to do steady, honest work, Miss Folger invariably gave credit; but carelessness of any kind she found hard to overlook. A forgotten pencil would cause her to say, "Go and get your pencil; and remember, a good workman never forgets his tools."

The Coffin School differed from the public school of those days in at least two ways. Latin was a regular part of the curriculum and instruction in singing was required. The principal had certain songs which were favorites of his and in these the girls and boys were drilled until timing and words were perfect.

While Miss Sylvia was finishing her schooling and growing into a young woman, her aunt, Mrs. Handy, was helping her husband in his restaurant business, then in later years running rooming and boarding houses. Mr. Handy's most famous eating place was on the old Steamboat Wharf, a location, it might be said, he inherited from his stepfather, "Uncle" Scudder.

## Opened Restaurant

On the north side of the old wharf, Mr. Scudder, a Cape-Codder as were all the Handys, opened a small restaurant which catered to the vacationists and daily "trippers" who arrived on the Sankaty, the first propeller boat to run from the mainland to the Island. His right-hand assistant as a young man was Calvert Handy, Jr., who gained considerable skill under his stepfather's direction.

After Mr. Handy's marriage to Miss Ray, he opened his own place at his stepfather's old location. This met with such success that after a few years he opened a Winter restaurant on Main street. Finally he and his wife decided to combine their

interests of a home and an eating place under one roof. Their first rooming and boarding house stood on the corner of Center and Lily streets where Holiday Inn stands now. It was called Swain's Inn. Gradually they expanded to a larger house on Gay street, named The Waverly, and from there, still growing, they opened the Worth House on North Water street, the building now owned by Dr. C. K. Veo, called The Nantucket House.

Mrs. Handy remembers those hard-working years very clearly. A woman of considerable spirit, even at 92, she declared she enjoyed them. The friends she made when they stayed under her hospitable roof still call upon her in the Summer, and send her cards and friendly notes at Christmas.

Both Miss Sylvia and Mrs. Handy enjoy a backward look at events and people of other years. Miss Sylvia's face lights with enthusiasm as she sits, rocking and knitting on a brown sweater in the window of her living-room. "Talking of the old days is fun," she said. "I feel I should have no real place on Petticoat Row for my shop was small and I didn't run it very long. But it is pleasant to remember."

## Petticoat Row

### Speech Instructor Responsible For Many Of Island Dramatic Productions

Petticoat Row, this week, walks up the two long flights of stairs which lead to the third floor of Academy Hill School, there to sit down with Mrs. Mary Walker, English instructor of the High School faculty, director of dramatics and, aside from the performance of the Summer Straight Wharf Theater, responsible for many of the Island's community dramatic productions.

According to the 1945 Senior yearbook, prepared and edited by Mrs. Walker, third prize winner in the annual National Year Book exhibit in the class of small schools with enrollment of 300 or less, her pastime is "attending plays" and her bugbear "poor speech." Since these two comments come from the page, "The Teachers as we see them," it is clear that as an instructor, Mrs. Walker has impressed the young mind with her professional skill as well as with her own enthusiasm.

Interested in plays and speech since her High School days in New Bedford—she was giving private speech lessons and professional readings even then—she introduced the first full credit English speech course in the Nantucket High School in 1944, a course even yet not given in some high schools. It is Mrs. Walker's opinion that speech standards all over the country are slowly being raised. "I hope to see the time," she said, "when Nantucket will have not an optional but a required course in correct speech for all its graduates."

Mrs. Walker knew Nantucket previous to her marriage to Dr. Walker in 1934. During the Summers of 1929 and 1931 she had companioned Dr. C. K. Veo's young daughter, Lenore, and two seasons later, helped Mrs. Walton H. Adams with her Summer house guests.

Those two seasons developed an affection for the Island which remains with her and became the basis for the permanent home on Fair street where the two sons of Dr. and Mrs. Walker are fast growing into young men.

#### Became Island Teacher

Three years after they moved to the Island Mrs. Walker began her teaching in the High School. There had been no drama work for about ten years previous to her first year of teaching. Within two years she had raised dramatics to a five point subject and the girls and boys were required to produce at least one one-act play each year.

Mrs. Walker had the unusual experience of instructing young people with real ability. At least two of them have continued with the training received under Mrs. Walker and are doing outstanding work in small theater groups this Winter. Miss Jacqueline Killen, studying at State Teacher's College at Bridgewater, is active in her college dramatic club as well as in the Bridgewater Players, a local group, while Miss Shirley Yerxa is majoring in drama and speech work at Emerson College in Boston.

The first one-act play produced in High School in 1942 was "Two Crooks and a Lady" with Robert Ray, Shirley Yerxa, Theresa Paradis and Stewart Mooney in the cast. In the Spring of the same year, the drama class working with Miss Ellen Ramsdell's Glee Club gave a Variety Show which included a one-act play and speech by the verse choir, Mrs. Walker's innovation.

One of the more successful of the one-act plays produced by a student was "Little Women," a version written by Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson of the Straight Wharf Theater. The cast working under the direction of Miss Yerxa consisted of Margaret Reis as Joe; Ruth Chapel, Amy; Catherine Mayo, Meg; Carol Coggins, Beth; Marion Day, Mrs. March; Virginia Hussey, Aunt March and Jean Lowell, Hanna.

As the students grew more proficient and Mrs. Walker understood more of their ability, the class branched into three-act plays, and successfully dramatized a farce, "The Whole Town's Talking." Those who had parts in this longer play were Kathryn Toner, Theresa

Paradis, Margaret Lamb, Donald Gibbs, Eliot Barnard, Stewart Mooney and Robert Ray.

This was followed a year later by "Best Foot Forward," greeted with delight by parents and friends gathered at Bennett Hall. The large cast included Daniel Murphy, Sidney Conway, Morton Kaufman, John Pineo, Ruth Ann Murphy, Shirley Yerxa, Ruth Chapel and Jacqueline Killen.

#### Trained Early In Speech

Mrs. Walker's own background and training qualify her admirably for the role of speech teacher and stage director of Nantucket's young people. Born in Lancashire, England, she came with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Pendlebury, at the age of three to live in New Bedford.

Except for one year at the Blackburn grammar school in Lancashire, England, Mrs. Walker attended New Bedford's public schools, graduating from High School there in 1925. Already trained in her chosen vocation, she gave private speech lessons during her four high school years and read professionally for many clubs and organizations in the city. When radio station WNBH opened at Marion she was a popular reader over the air.

During her four years at Bates College in Lewiston, Me., from which she graduated in 1929, she was distinguished for dramatic ability. At the annual public speaking contest at Bates, open to all Freshmen and Sophomores, Mrs. Walker received both years the first prize of \$25. At the end of her four years she was presented at graduation with a sterling silver trophy for the woman who had contributed the most to college activities and life.

The Fall following her graduation she became a teacher in the New Bedford High School and Director of Girls' Work at the Dennison Memorial Settlement House in the same city. One fifth of all the city's girl scouts, a total of 200 girls, came under her supervision in addition.

Apr. 2, 1948

tion to a large Brownie pack. She supervised and planned recreational activities, held classes in religious education, basketball and handicraft; yet continued in free hours private lessons in speech and professional readings.

It was in High School she met Dr. Walker — appropriately enough on the stage where "Gypsy Trail" was in production. Mrs. Walker had the feminine lead while the tall, rangy boy, the second male lead, was her suitor. After their marriage in 1934 during Mr. Walker's Junior year at the College of Osteopathy in Kirksville, Mo., the young couple lived there while he completed his training and one year of internship.

#### Taught At Northwestern

Meanwhile, the tireless Mrs. Walker studied and taught at the Northwestern Teacher's College. The course which interested her the most as a teacher was a creative dramatics class in which she directed the group in the production of its own plays.

The Walkers returned east to Boston where for one year at City Hospital Dr. Walker externed — a term denoting the medic in charge of out-patients. Then Dr. Walker opened a general practice in Eagleville, Mo., a town of 300 people. In speaking of this brief period of seven months, Mrs. Walker commented that the Middlewesterners often react adversely to the reserved manners of the Easterners. "But," she said, "they accepted us whole-heartedly and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. They were very friendly."

After a year or two in New Bedford where Dr. Walker maintained an office with his parents, both of whom are doctors, they once more picked up their household belongings and their young son and moved to Nantucket in the Spring of 1939.

One of the most successful of the community shows organized by Mrs. Walker during her first few Winters on the Island was a "Stunt Night" put on by the town's organizations. She contacted each one, asking them to prepare a stunt or a skit, to be given at Bennett Hall. As she looks back to the night, she remembers several particularly lively and amusing numbers. The Odd Fellows gave "Wild Nell, the Pet of the Plains." The Redmen produced an excellent skit based on Nantucket history called "Legend of Indian Chief Wauwinet." The response and cooperation of the organizations was wonderful.

The Summer of 1940 she worked with the Straight Wharf Players under Mrs. Wilson, playing the feminine lead, Dolly, in the play "Believe me, Xantippe."

Mrs. Walker is a past regent of the Daughters of the British Empire, a chapter organized on the Island about 1941 for those whose grandfathers were born under the British flag, no matter where it flew. Present regent is Miss Annie Marshall and Mrs. Frank Ramsdell is treasurer and Mrs. George Sykes, secretary.

While Mrs. Walker's interests have narrowed somewhat during the last years due to the pressure of school duties, she continues to be interested in all that pertains to Nantucket. As she looks across the town from the windows of her room on the third floor of the Academy Hill School, she does not regret her decision to return to the Island she liked so much almost twenty years ago and to drop permanent roots into its sandy soil.



